

Fragile Earth



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Fragile Earth

June 2007

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RFPD operates in accordance with Rotary International policy but is not an agency of, or controlled by Rotary International.

RFPD to Showcase at Rotary International Annual Convention



Head to the mountains of Salt Lake City for the 98th annual RI Convention, slated for 17-20 June 2007. There, you'll join family, friends, and fellow Rotarians from around the world at Rotary's largest annual get-together. This year's convention is fun, informative, and affordable, with special RFPD features. Visit www.rotary.org for more information.

RFPD Activities:

Country Chair & Zone Coordinator Training: Sunday, June 17th
1300-1730 (1:00-5:30pm)

Workshops: Monday, June 18th
"RFPD's Contributions to the MDG's"
1330-1500 (1:30-3:00pm)

"A Comprehensive Approach to Reduce Maternal Mortality"
1530-1700 (3:30-5:00pm)

Annual General Meeting: Tuesday, June 19th
1730-1930 (5:30-7:30pm)
Featured speaker: Frosty Wooldridge

Visit the RFPD booths in the friendship hall for the latest Population Projects and Information: **RFPD Booth #832 & RFPD Project Booth #2114**

RFPD office: 770-963-3252, ext. 200 or visit: www.rifpd.org

**FROM THE DESK OF CHAIRMAN
SALEM MASHHOUR
AND VICE-CHAIRMAN ROBERT ZINSER**

**One of the world's greatest
scandals: Maternal Mortality**

by Robert Zinser

Our Action Group is now entrusted, by deduction, by the recent Council on Legislation to tend to population concerns, since the Enactment for a "RI Standing Committee on Population Concerns" proposed by many districts failed. It failed mainly under the weight of the Board-sponsored argument: if we allow one interest group to have a standing committee, then there will be others wanting the same. RFPD endorsed the proposed enactment, as we see how important population concerns are to the well being of poor people around the world.

RFPD will continue to be dedicated to these concerns. Without such a Standing Committee, we will have to continuously draw the attention of Rotary to important facts that humanitarian programs need to be considered as a whole, and not as separate entities. They are all linked under the banner of Population Concerns. No mother of the world is against child spacing. Responsible parenthood is self-evident for Rotarians. Is it not fair to enlighten the poor, who do not have the necessary information and access to services? The UN Assembly last year added "The universal access to reproductive health services" to the Millennium Development Goals. The Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved without Reproductive Health, including Family Planning, as Kofi Annan said. There will be no sustainable development without population and development work, as parliamentarians of the world agreed. Statesmen of the developing world announced that child spacing services should be offered to improve the lives of their people. Scientists meanwhile now agree that the climate change is manmade, and will create rise of the sea level and floods, from which poor people in developing countries will suffer most.

Population Concerns are everywhere. Nobody can ignore them – certainly not in the long run. The World Bank, with its mission of global poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards expresses Population Concerns as its new Strategy "Health, Nutrition and Population": "Good health, nutrition, and reproductive policies, and effective health services, are critical links in the chain of events that allow countries to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty, high fertility, poor health, and low economic growth." The World Bank continues to play a central role in ensuring access to all reproductive services and will continue its long-standing and strong commitment to the Cairo 1994 agreement on family planning and sexual and reproductive health.

In its new strategy, the Bank commits itself to work on population issues in countries with high unmet needs of sexual and reproductive health in the following areas: High maternal mortality and morbidity, unwanted fertility and poor reproductive health, which continue in many poor countries. Gaps in sexual and reproductive health care account for nearly one-fifth of the worldwide burden of illness and premature death, and one-third of the illness and death among women of reproductive age. There are approximately 75 million unplanned pregnancies a year, a third of which result in abortion, which would be avoided by enlightening women on child spacing. An estimated 120 million women want to space or further limit childbearing, but lack access to family planning. This number is expected to grow.



Salem Mashhour, Chairman, RFPD



Robert Zinser, Vice-Chairman, RFPD

In a recent report, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation draws attention to the high maternal mortality rate in northern Nigeria, "With high fertility rates and little access to contraception, more women in northern Nigeria die from childbirth-related cases each year than almost anywhere else in the world. A staggering 2,400 mothers die for every 100,000 deliveries by one estimate" (Maternal Mortality in northern Nigeria: A population based study. European Journal of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Biology, 109, 153-159).

"Improvement of Maternal Health - Prevention and Treatment of Obstetric Fistula," RFPD's project in northern Nigeria is sponsored by many German and Austrian districts and clubs, Rotaract and Inner Wheel, as well as TRF. Project coordinators received alarming data on maternal mortality from the General Hospital Wudil, Kano State, which is one of the projects fistula centers. They reported a Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of 7,000-8,000 mothers' deaths for every 100,000 deliveries. This data was recorded from January 2005 to March 2006. That is three times the average in that area. Although the Rotary project team knows the area well, the team was surprised about these extremely high figures.

RFPD is working on an action plan to improve the frightening situation in this rural hospital. Being engaged in our "Comprehensive Approach to Reduce Maternal Mortality" since the middle of 2005, we know it is not an easy task. Our asset is the network of many dedicated Rotary and Rotaract clubs in northern Nigeria, which make us believe in our current and future success.

If you are at the RI Convention in Salt Lake City, take in RFPD's workshop dealing with this issue Monday, June 18 from 15:30-17:00 (3:30-5:00pm). See page 4 for details.

Uruguay Project Educates Pregnant Adolescents

Reported by Latin America
Area Coordinator - Luis Serra

The Rotary Club of Salto, Uruguay (D4960) has been supporting a project entitled "Integral Support to Adolescent Pregnant Women." With the assistance of RFPD's Country Chair for Uruguay, Dr. Neri L. Campos Pierri, pregnant adolescent women get the chance to finish their education.



In this project, Rotarians investigate which adolescents have left school and if they are pregnant, they invite them to a School run through the Project. There, they finish their education with a summarized program. Rotarians also teach them about preventing new pregnancies, responsible parenthood, and the care of their reproductive health. The school has a trade school element, where Rotarians teach them an occupation, so that they may recover their self-esteem and provide for themselves and for their child. This way, the teen mothers are not forced to begin the cycle of being a single mother looking for the first man who accepts to raise a boy, and giving him another son. Soon, they are left single, with many children, poor and exhausted.

The project total is \$38,000 and is in its third year. Every year the project includes thirty adolescent mothers who successfully graduate toward a brighter future with healthy, happy families.



Population Enactment Fails at 2007 Council on Legislation

by Buck Lindsay

RFPD General Secretary and District Representative to the COL

Among 336 pieces of proposed legislation at the COL held late April in Chicago was the proposed *Enactment for an RI Standing Committee on Population Concerns*. The same enactment in 2004 had been 'Referred to the Board' by the Council, which was a maneuver sponsored by the Board to avoid the requirement for another RI Committee. Under the 'floodgate' theory, the Board fears that if one special issue gets a standing committee (which is estimated to cost RI about \$40,000 per year), then the line of others wanting a standing committee will grow.

Considerable work had been done by RFPD members this year to build support for the Population Enactment, with 18 districts (the most of any piece of legislation) endorsing the proposal, with many letters in support to the Council and with much one-on-one advocacy. But the Council has a heartbeat of its own. The 530 voting delegates have to work aggressively under the five-day time clock to deal with the number of items, hearing about 65 per day. After falling behind pace in the first few days, the time limit for each piece was reduced, and the number of speakers allowed to speak for or against was limited.

The Population Enactment came up late on the third day of the Council. My two minute motion to adopt the Enactment was only 300 words due to the reduced time limit, but it covered the basics of the issue: the burgeoning population numbers, the human suffering and environmental degradation that goes on because of it, and how a standing committee could help Rotary develop a better focus on the issue and how to deal with it. Five delegates spoke for and five against the item. Interestingly, the five in favor were all from less-developed countries (Uruguay, Nigeria and India), including past RI President Raja Saboo. Those against were all from more developed countries, including a representative of the Board itself. The points made by those against were the 'floodgate' point, that the population issue was divisive and controversial, that it was political and religious, and that it was 'not fair to all concerned' for rich people to be forcing population programs on poor people.

At this point in the consideration, I personally thought those in favor were ahead. My closing one minute comment reminded the delegates that Rotary's population work to date has always been respectful of all politics, religions and cultures and that the poor of the world in my experience have been very perplexed by the lack of understanding of the needs, as held by many from the more developed world. In retrospect, I believe there should have been a more serious challenge to the conscience of the delegates; the heart usually trumps the mind, they say.

The vote was called, and the result was 214 for and 286 against - a 72 vote spread. If 36 against-voters had voted for, the vote would have been split. In the days since the result was announced, my mind has been spinning with thoughts of what I could have said differently to have gained that 36 vote shift, and what that 58% of the voters against really had on their minds.

I sincerely believe that the board members, staff and friends of RFPD did the best they could to see that the Enactment for a Standing Committee of Population Concerns was passed by the Council. RFPD remains dedicated to our mission of educating Rotarians on the population issue and developing projects that meet the needs of poor people around the world.

Thank you to all who supported this effort.

RFPD Training for Country Chairs and Zone Coordinators

Sunday, June 17, 2007

1:00-5:30pm

Salt Palace, Meeting Room 251C

AGENDA

1) RFPD Structure and Processes and RAG Updates (1-1:15pm)

2) How to be an effective Country Chair/Zone Coordinator - Success Stories (1:15-1:45pm)

This includes information on setting up a bank account, promoting RFPD, getting others on the team like deputy/assistants, gaining members, conceiving project proposals and getting sponsoring.

3) Guest speakers (1:45-2:30pm):

Malcolm Potts & Martha

Campbell: Both are on faculty at the University of California Berkley in the School of Public Health. They challenge the current paradigm for understanding population growth and what enables fertility to decline.

Prof. Malcolm Potts is a

British obstetrician who has worked for 40 years in family planning in developing countries. He conceptualized "community-based distribution". He has published ten books and over 200 scientific articles. His work has taken him to 80 countries, and he has worked as a consultant to the World Bank and the British, American, Canadian, Egyptian and Sri Lankan governments. His current focus is on safe motherhood and family planning in Nigeria.

Dr. Martha Campbell is a political scientist and expert in population issues. She directed the population program of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation in the 1990's and she founded the non-profit organization Venture Strategies for Health and Development. Most recently she worked as the principal advisor in the British Parliament on a landmark report on population growth and its impact on the Millennium Development Goals.

4) Skit: Zone Coordinators Face the Challenge (2:30-3pm)

5) Role Playing & Analysis (3-5:15pm)

Rotary International facilitates RFPD WORKSHOPS AT THE SALT PALACE:

Plan to participate in both of these two important opportunities for dialogue.

"RFPD's Contribution to the Millennium Development Goals"

Monday, June 18th from 1:30-3:00pm - Room 150 - G

The Rotarian Action Group for Population & Development (RFPD) continues to motivate Rotarians to focus their World Community Service work on the MDGs. We will present club projects - supported by our Action Group - which contribute to these goals. They include maternal health, child spacing, HIV/AIDS testing, literacy and combating poverty with microcredit. Find out how you can contribute to the MGDs.

Panelists & Topics: Moderator: Buck Lindsay, General Secretary, RFPD

"Introduction: MDGs and Reproductive Health" and "Improvement of Maternal Health-Prevention & Treatment of Obstetric Fistula in Nigeria"

Robert Zinser, Vice-Chairman & Area Coordinator, Europe

"Saheli Women's Centers in India"

Rekha Shetty, Communications Director & Area Coordinator, India

"Child Spacing"

Dolapo Lufadeju, Treasurer & Area Coordinator, Africa (Sub Sahara)

"Literacy & Micro-credit"

Salem Mashhour, Chairman & Area Coordinator, North Africa

"HIV/AIDS Testing"

Bill Cadwallader, Area Coordinator, North America

"Zero Adolescent Pregnancy (ZAP) in Latin America"

Luis Serra, Area Coordinator, Latin America

"A Comprehensive Approach to Reduce Maternal Mortality"

Monday, June 18th from 3:30-5:00pm - Room 150-G

In this current MG-Project in Nigerian, German, Austrian Districts collaborates with NGOs and Governments. Maternal Mortality Reduction requires collaboration. This project includes Behaviour Change, Structural Improvements, Fistula Prevention and Treatment, Prevention of AIDS Transmission, Rehabilitation, Microcredit and Safe Water. The Program will be a Call to Action for Maternal Survival. LEAD's THE WAY in contributing to MDG 5.

Panelists & Topics: Moderator: John Eberhard, Advisory Board Member, RFPD

"Project Concept"

Robert Zinser, RFPD Vice-Chairman & Area Coordinator, Europe

"Needs of Community, Role of Governments, Traditional Rulers and other Stakeholders"

Kola Owoka, Project Chairman, Nigeria

"Experiences from the Field"

Saliu Ahmed, DGE 2007-2008 D9120

"Fistula Prevention and Treatment, Structural improvements"

PP Peter Neuner, RFPD Countrychair Austria

"Role of Advocacy and Family Planning"

Dolapo Lufadeju, RFPD Treasurer and Area Coordinator, Africa (Subsahara)

"Behaviour Change through Radios Serials"

Bill Ryerson, President of Population Media Center

"Introduction of Vouchers and General Views"

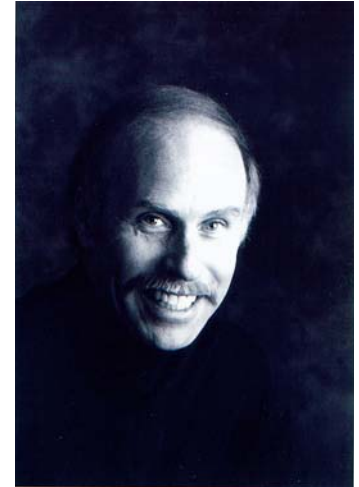
Prof. Malcolm Potts, University of California Berkley

RFPD Annual General Meeting - Salt Palace

RFPD will hold its Annual General Meeting at the Salt Palace in Meeting Room 251C from 5:30-7:30pm Tuesday, June 19th. Attend and hear the latest updates on RFPD, it's activities and upcoming information for RAG's and P & D concerns. Learn from a grants presentation by Lana Dakan of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and a presentation entitled "THE COMING POPULATION CRISIS for AMERICA: AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT" by Frosty Wooldridge (details below). Hear updates from several of our Country Chairs and Area Coordinators. Each will present the current situation in their country or area and will give a summary of how they are improving the lives of people through Rotary. We hope you will join us!

About Frosty Wooldridge

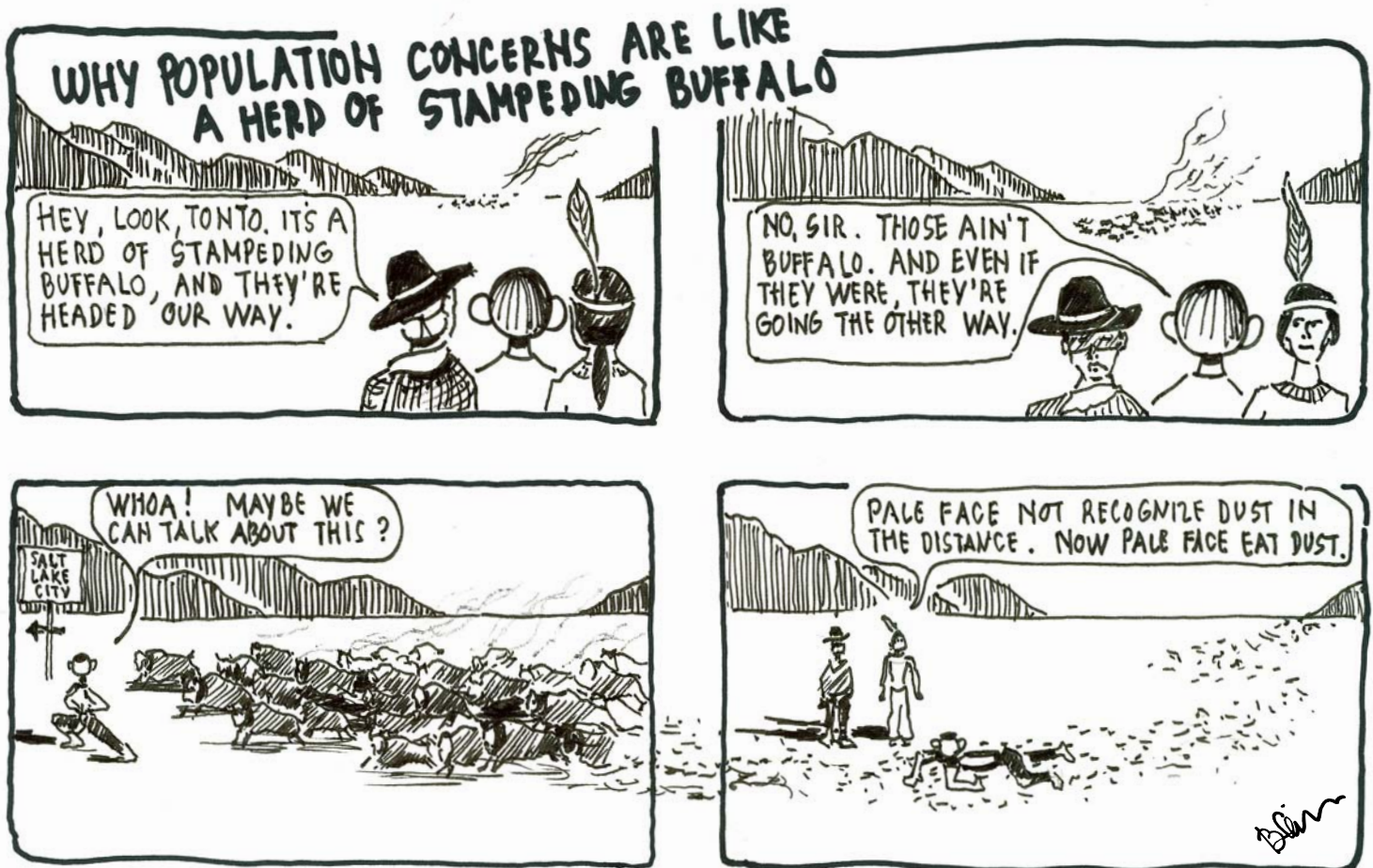
Frosty Wooldridge holds a unique perspective of the world, cultures and families that he obtained bicycling 100,000 miles around the globe and across six continents in the past 30 years. He has seen the crisis of overpopulation in Mexico, China, Bangladesh, India and South America. He has written hundreds of articles on a regular basis for 16 national and 2 international magazines. He has had hundreds of editorials published in top national newspapers including the Rocky Mountain News, Denver Post, the Albany Herald and Christian Science Monitor.



Frosty Wooldridge

"THE COMING POPULATION CRISIS for AMERICA: AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT"

The USA will double its population from 300 million to over 600 million sometime past mid-century. It will add 100 million within 33 years by 2040. Demographic predictions show Colorado adds five million people to the Front Range in the next 50 years. California will add 20 million within the next 30 years. Texas will add 12 million by 2025. We are creating an irreversible crisis with unsolvable problems for our children. *continued on page 7*



The Forgotten Luck

The world is divided into nearly 200 nations with a population of over six and one half billion people. The most common perception of life is to be a fairly either genuine believer within a certain religion, or to regard religion more as a symbol of moral codes and human values. The latter are usually individuals who do not feel that such rules are necessarily binding.

It has evidently always been like that. Even today's drawbacks, such as conflicts, wars, crime, immorality, unfair self-interests and indifferences have through all times affected the world.

The results of this can be seen as a reminder of the fact that everything might not be as it should be. Violations against human rights, women's subordinated state in many countries, the attitude by many in the West to the traditional composition of the family, HIV/AIDS, abortions made without reasons, drugs, misuse of alcohol, human trade and family aggression are all such problems.

Natural calamities also have become more common. Abnormal storms and cyclones, heavy rain, destructive floods, draught, devastating earthquakes, landslides, lasting heat waves, surprisingly cold periods in warm countries, swarms of locusts, large-sized hail and other extreme natural phenomenons seem to take place more often than before. The catastrophic tsunami two years ago touched a large number of nationalities and cultures.

Due to the rapidly increasing technology of today, we have all the tools as never before to organize life on earth to function adequately. Our resources are immense, but large sums are wasted on military purposes, and wasteful consumption. This occurs at the same time when nearly half of the global population lives in utter poverty, and many even without potable water. Thousands of children die every day from diarrhea. One of the utmost serious consequences of poor education is the vast population increases in the poor countries.

There is need for more solidarity, so as to prevent poverty from crippling a major portion of the inhabitants on this globe that we all share. It should be possible for all to acquire at least the basic needs. At the grass-root level, one's fellow-beings should be met by our readiness to help and our devotedness. At the macro-level, decisions should be reasonable and appropriate, thus constituting the foundation for a good life for all nationalities and societies.

by Harry Blässar - RFPD Country Chair/Finland

RFPD Population Project List (as of 5/23/07) Please check the RFPD website for the most current updates.

RFPD#	Project	Club, Country/District
P421	Reproductive Health Education	Bahcesehir, Turkey/D2420
P451	Women's Empowerment Center	Shimoga North, India/D3180
P452	R.H. Educational Institution for Girls	Silk City Rajshahi, Bangladesh/D3280
P453	Saheli Women's Health Center	Patna, India/D3250
P454	Poverty Eradication/HIV/AIDS Project	Kalomo, Zambia/9210
P455	Girl-Child Education Project	Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, India/D3160
P458	Saheli Women's Health Center	Koderma, India/D3250
P462	Women Empowerment Village Project	Shimoga North, India/D3180
P463	Micro Credit for Women Empowerment	Shimoga North, India/D3180
P464	Mobile Computer Lab for Women & Girl Child	Shimoga North, India/D3250
P465	Reproductive & Child Health & HIV/AIDS	Shimoga North, India/D3250
P466	Integrated Women Development Project	Shimoga North, India/D3250
P467	Family Planning & Maternal Health Training	Chipata, Zambia/D9210
P468	Maternal & Parental Health Education & Micro-Credit	Kaduna State, Nigeria/D9120
P470	Literacy & Vocational Training Center for Women	Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, India/D3160
P471	Reproductive Health Training Program for 3 ANM's	Mt. Everest, Lalitpur, Nepal/D3290
P472	Instruments/Equipment for Reproductive Health/ANM's	Mt. Everest, Lalitpur, Kavre Banepa, Charumati Nepal/D3290
P473	Reproductive Health Training Program for 3 ANM's	Kathmandu, Mt. Everest, Lalitpur, Nepal/D3290
P 474	Revolving loans for Micro projects & Vocational Training	El-Shorouk, Cairo, Egypt/D3250
P475	Micro-Credit Program for Small Entrepreneur	Yogyakarta, Indonesia/D3400

All projects have completed Matching Grant Applications. Grant cycle is July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. For more information, contact: Jennifer Hendrickson, Executive Director, RFPD, Phone: 770-963-3252, ext. 200, Fax: 770-822-9492, Email: rifpd@aol.com, Website: www.rifpd.org

RFPD at the Bi-district Conference in Guatemala “Lead The Way for Mankind”

On March 5 through 11, 2006, a Bi-district Conference was held in Guatemala for Districts 4240 and 4250. Luis Serra was invited by RFPD Country Chair Ing. Héctor Centeno to speak about Population Concerns. His trip to the conference in Guatemala was a huge success.

Luis' speech was titled “Lead The Way for Mankind through Population and Development.” The 40-minute presentation was delivered immediately after the opening of the conference by the President of the Nation, Dr. José Rafael Berger Perdomo. This indicates the importance that the Guatemalan Rotarians place on Population and Development issues. Luis's presentation was so well-received that he was asked by the Representative of the President of RI, PDG Altimar Fernandes, from Sao Paulo, Brazil, to present the RFPD message to his 2007-2008 District Conference in Sao Paulo.

Immediately after the conference, Rotarian Serra participated in a TV panel where he was one of seven people interviewed. The others were the lady leader of the Segeplan Program (of Population and Development) of the Government; a doctor of the Catholic Action, who you imagine was against the protection methods; the lady Director of a Catholic radio; a medical Director of UNFPA in Guatemala; the President of the Citizen Convergence of Women, and a doctor Coordinator of the Health Ministry; and Luis as RFPD Latin America Coordinator. The TV presenter was an expert on the matter, since he is the nephew of Isabel de Bosch (a Rotarian lady very active in Population & Development projects). They were able to have a challenging discussion. Luis made it clear that our more important task is not to say to people how many children they should have, but to educate so that the people decide freely, according to their Culture, their Faith and their free conscience (but also with Social Conscience), how many children they want and they can have, maintain, educate and love. This message was the message that finally remained with the public.

Although there were differences of opinion with catholic Rotarians of Opus Dei, all of them arrived at a common point of understanding, for the need for education of Reproductive Health. He was surprised, however, by the opinion of some Progressive Priests. Héctor Centeno (CC for Guatemala) introduced him to one of them, Fray Cayetano Parra, an important Priest in a very residential district Church, who said to Luis: “Now is the time for Rotary to initiate a campaign on Population and Development as important as Polio Plus”. He added: “ I advise young people that abstinence is the only infallible method of protection against sexual transmitted diseases and prevention of unintended pregnancies, that they must be strong against so many temptations... but that if they are going it to do it, that they not be stupid, that they do it well and they take care of... “ I am sure that this priest is going to help us.

Luis was even more impressed because RFPD CC Héctor Centeno is on the Presidential Commission of Guatemala for Science and Technology, and works next to the Vice-president of the Nation, with great influence on Segeplan (Secretariat of Programming and Planning), and one of the creators of the Law of Social Development (that includes Responsible Paternity and Maternity). This group has obtained the participation of all sectors in this Law, even of the Episcopal Committee. With that official endorsement, the Service Opportunities are opened for the Rotarians of Guatemala. Luis also obtained support for the COL item 07-168 of both Delegates of Central America to the COL. He made many contacts with the PDG's of Central America, and is still communicating with them because they are interested in joining RFPD's leadership.

Finally, we can consider that this presentation at the Bi-district Conference of Central America had results that will “Lead the Way, Sharing Rotary” on Population Issues in Central America in the future.

- by Luis Emilio Serra - RFPD Latin América Area Coordinator

UNFPA Online Video Channel

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) video channel contains a collection of video features beginning in 2004. The collection is organized by topic and is easily searchable by country or keywords. Topics include reproductive health, fistula, gender equality, culturally sensitive approaches, safe motherhood, among others.

<http://video.unfpa.org/>

RFPD Annual General Meeting

(continued from page 5) Wooldridge presents a clear picture of the future for America if we continue on this Titanic-like course, while offering solutions that stand in line with Einstein's appreciation for stepping out of the box. He began as a teacher in Brighton, Colorado in 1973 and is the author of seven books. He presents a powerful and compelling program to all audiences, laced with humor, compassion and sense of optimism. Wooldridge has been a guest on hundreds of radio and TV programs across the United States.

Wooldridge shares information whereby every person in the audience may take action on a personal level to ensure a viable future for Colorado, New York, Texas, California, our children and the United States. For more information visit www.frostywooldridge.com

CALL FOR POPULATION PROJECTS:

RFPD finds International Sponsors for population-related Matching Grant projects. Please send your completed TRF MG Applications to: Jennifer Hendrickson, 270 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, GA, 30045, or fax to 770-822-9492. RFPD will promote your project and will assist in finding a sponsoring Rotary Club to provide support. Provide the correct and current signatures with the Matching Grant application. Download applications at www.rotary.org. RFPD promotes projects that include maternal and child health, child spacing, reproductive health and education, vocational training, girl-child education and micro-credit for women.

HAT's OFF!

RFPD Country Chair, Faye Cran of Tanzania has been responsible for more than 30 projects in the past Rotary year. Fran works closely with each Rotary Club to establish projects that specifically meet the needs of the communities in her country. Projects include clean water, maternal health supplies, school books and education programs.



MG projects in Tanzania



Her most ambitious project is a project in Maji Ya Chai, where they assisted women to become self reliant by sponsoring ten milking cows and a bull, not only to produce milk for the dairy, but to introduce an environmentally friendly system of pasteurizing the milk with the cows own manure being sluiced into a bio-gas digester to produce fuel (gas) needed to heat the milk. The gas that collects in the storage tank is piped to the dairy and used in the same way as any gas stove. A further 80 cows will go to the families in the community. This offers each family the first step up the ladder out of poverty. It is a condition that each able member of the family plants and rears a fruit tree as well as digs a trench for a biogas digester and supplies manual labor to build the cowshed.

For more information, or to sponsor a project in Tanzania, email Faye Cran at fayecran@habari.co.tz.

The Future of Population Concerns - 2007 COL:

The Council on Legislation meets every three years. It can often be the most important gathering of Rotarians in the world, because it joins representatives from all of the 530 Rotary districts and represents Rotary world-wide. This year was no exception as several "watershed" decisions were made that indicate what is on the minds of Rotarians, and the directions they want to move.

The RFPD Enactment failed, but for reasons that had no impact on the mission to which RFPD is committed to. It is my belief that concerned citizens now better understand the mission of RFPD, and can stand behind our goals.

The challenge for RFPD now is to simply demonstrate that Rotary has a responsibility to provide the simple education to women and their families of how they can put space between their children. This has to be done in order to have healthy mothers, and children born into environments conducive to their well being, and to use the tool of providing improved maternal health as a basic avenue to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

Poverty is the cruel cancer of human society whose clinical signs are illiteracy, hunger, impure water, crime and war. If we look deep enough into the cause of these clinical signs, we will all soon realize the cause is that families cannot reduce the impact of these clinical signs without first deciding how often they want to have children. No nation has ever brought itself out of poverty without first developing the right to put space between their children.

The Enactment to establish a Standing Committee for Population Concerns, was supported by 18 districts, including my own district. The RI Board of Directors made the point that if there was a Standing Committee for Population Concerns, there would be a flood for other Standing Committees for Hunger, Literacy, Malaria, HIV/AIDS and Poverty. They also feel that the Rotarian Action Groups now available to these specific interest groups allow

them continuity in their programs of action, so standing committees are not necessary.

Delegates from Latin America argued that Rotary needs programs to assist in the reduction of adolescent, out of wedlock, pregnancies. African delegates argued that mothers need to have education for, and access to, methods to allow them to space their pregnancies if they have HIV/AIDS, sickle cell anemia, malaria and anemia from parasitism which increases the likelihood of death during pregnancy and increases the risk of mortality of the newborn. Indians argued that parents must be provided education and access to child-spacing techniques to allow them to only have the number of children they can feed, clothe and educate.

American delegates argued against providing such assistance through Rotary because it is controversial, against the religions of some Rotarians and some nations in the world are not producing enough children to reproduce themselves, therefore child-spacing education and access should not be provided to the poorest of the poor.

It was of interest that the citizens of the richest nation in the world, whose citizens have taken full advantage of child-spacing techniques to manage the size of their families, would be the most outspoken in denying this tool to the women in the poorest nations on earth, to lift themselves out of poverty. The argument has nothing to do with religion; COL delegates represented nearly every religion in the world and all delegates utilized child-spacing techniques to provide wealth and education for their own families. Likewise, child-spacing is truly not political; Rotary delegates represented nearly every political system in the world from their 170 represented nations and not one of them would expect their wife, daughter or granddaughter to become pregnant if they were not healthy enough to complete the pregnancy.

- by Bill Cadwallader, PRID, Area Coordinator for North America

Ethiopia: An Emerging RFPD Development Ground

Over 10 years ago, I started as a Rotaractor in Germany to create awareness on population issues and to recruit new members to RFPD. I continue to be convinced that RFPD is the most important RI action group. The first RFPD "Child-Spacing" pilot project in Nigeria served as an example for the sustainable effects that child spacing/reproductive health education can have on the reduction of population growth. In the last 6 years, as a Rotarian of the RC San Francisco #2, I raised funds to support reproductive health education/microcredits projects for women in Nigeria.

A country with a great need of RFPD's services is Ethiopia. Ethiopia has a 2.6% per annum population growth rate and 30% of the total population (21 million) is between the ages of 10-24. This challenges the country's efforts to reduce poverty and to increase the reproductive health awareness. On my recent trip to Addis Ababa, I took the opportunity to meet with the newly formed RFPD committee and presented a project proposal in support of the emerging RFPD activities in Ethiopia.

I met with Dr. Tadesse Alemu, RFPD Country Chair-Ethiopia, Dr. Amakelech Teferi-Bel, RFPD Deputy Country Chair, and Negede Gezaheng, a Rotaractor and RFPD secretary of the committee, including several other RFPD committee members. I was impressed with the enthusiasm of the committee members and their recent achievements. The committee has been successful in recruiting over 100 RFPD members from all five Rotary clubs in Addis Ababa. The RFPD committee is now soliciting Population & Development project proposals from the Rotary Clubs in Addis to post them on the RFPD website (rifpd.org) to identify international Rotary project partner clubs. The RFPD committee was interested to hear my proposal for a reproductive health education project that I had prepared after discussions with Rotarians in the US, Germany, Ethiopian Books for Children and Educational Foundation (Ethiopia Reads/EBCEF) and Population Media Center (PMC) in Addis.

Ethiopia Reads/EBCEF is an NGO geared towards bringing literacy and literacy related resources to adolescents in Ethiopia. This NGO agreed to provide guidance on the establishment of new libraries (in urban and rural Ethiopia) in existing school facilities and also provide library staff trainings. PMC, the second collaborating NGO, strives to improve the health and well being of people around the world through the use of entertainment-education strategies. PMC would provide the training material on family planning and reproductive health (e.g. books, audio/video tapes, drama topics for plays) to equip the libraries. Upon discussions with both NGOs, an agreement is now in place to fully support this project. The immediate goal is to submit a Matching Grant within the next 3-6 months. - by Boris Hesser (RC San Francisco #2)

Rotary-sponsored service clubs for young men and women: ROTARACT in Germany came together in Mannheim on their recent Conference (DEUKO) March 2007

Approximately 400 participants decided to put the focus of "Population and Development" into their annual 2007-2008 "Social Action Plan." By implementing several projects (including micro-loans) in developing countries, the main purpose of the plan is a campaign to inform young people on "zero adolescent pregnancy," and to disseminate knowledge about child spacing.

Two female students, Chair and Co-Chair and both members of ROTARACT, organized these Actions. In pursuit of their plans they, and the participating ROTARACT Clubs, are looking forward to receiving project requests from ROTARACT Clubs of countries in need. The focus will be on countries like Egypt, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan.

To increase the momentum of this initiative, you can help ROTARACT. If you have a request for a Project, please contact Daniel Moelders, ROTARACT-Club Düsseldorf, Germany and RFPD Representative in ROTARACT Germany. Email Address: D_Moelders@t-online.de

RFPD Leaders from Germany & Finland Align:

On May 6, 2007, RFPD Vice-Chairman, Prof. Robert Zinser, met Country Chair for Finland, Mr. Harry Blässar, at the Helsinki Airport. During a two and a half hour discussion, mutual views were exchanged about RFPD in general, and how the work for Population and Development issues is advancing in Germany and Finland. As both Prof. Zinser and Mr. Blässar have spent considerable time in developing countries, there was a common understanding regarding the problems challenging the developing world. Issues are those relating to population matters such as maternal and sexual health, child spacing and education of women.

Prof. Zinser has a long experience with RFPD, and does a meaningful amount of work to support the Action Group (which was founded in 1996). He has many ideas about furthering our case. A well weighed list of the principal arguments why Population Issues are so important will be drawn up to serve as a practical tool for everybody involved with this important subject. Look for further details at www.rifpd.org.

RFPD NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

(2/12/07 - 5/19/07)

Argentina
Lidia Gogorza

Australia
John Torrance

Honduras
Guillermo Enrique Valle M

India
L. Raj Mohan

USA
Tony Baker
Susan B. Brouillette
Rev. William Mounts
Marvin Pugh
Linda Saleski

EARTH POLICY NEWS

Lester Brown, author of "Plan B 2.0" has written a compelling strategy to eradicate poverty and lower population in parts one, two and three of **"PLAN B BUDGET FOR ERADICATING POVERTY AND STABILIZING POPULATION."**

He writes, "The twenty-first century began on an inspiring note when the countries that belong to the United Nations adopted the goal of cutting the number of people living in poverty in half by 2015. And as of 2005, the world is ahead of schedule for reaching this goal. There are two big reasons for this: China and India. China's economic growth of 9 percent a year over the last quarter-century and India's acceleration to close to 6 percent a year over the last decade are together lifting hundreds of millions out of poverty."

To read more, Part One, Two and Three are available for download at: www.earthpolicy.org

CITIES WITHOUT LIMITS: Struggling to cope with too many people

Two years ago Zimbabwe's muscular answer to the informal shacks and markets proliferating in its cities made headlines. About 700,000 people had their homes or stalls destroyed. Most are still waiting for the replacements that they were promised by the government. The Zambian government is now threatening to tackle the same problem in much the same way. Earlier this month, some illegal houses were razed in Lusaka, the capital, and officials have threatened to intensify the "cleanup" and extend it nationwide.

These are two examples of a continent-wide phenomenon; African cities are struggling to cope with an unprecedented influx of people. Most come from the countryside; making a decent living ploughing tiny plots of land is hard, and cities offer more hope of a job. But some are refugees from fighting. Luanda, built for half a million people, is now home to at least 4m, many of whom fled there during Angola's horrific civil war. Shacks have popped up in the most precarious of spaces, and in slums such as Boa Vista, near the port, ancient piles of garbage are composting in the streams that run between the makeshift shelters.

Johannesburg, South Africa's business capital, is facing similar problems. Over 20% of the city's population are thought to live in shacks and the city cannot build cheap houses fast enough. In places like Alexandra, one of the city's townships, shacks have been built dangerously close to the river and people drown when it swells. Plans are under way to move some people to new houses elsewhere.

But what happens when the people do not want to move? That is the problem facing the city in the old central business district. For years it has been kicking out poor people who had moved into the many abandoned buildings, claiming that they are unsafe. But now, lawyers acting for 300 people fighting eviction, argue that the city must provide alternative accommodation, preferably in the same area.

The catch is that property developers are turning the decrepit buildings, abandoned when most businesses fled a crime-wave for the northern suburbs in the early 1990s, into swanky apartment blocks, and property prices have been rocketing. A court ruled this week that the city has to find them another place to live, although it does not have to be in the centre of town. The case may now land on the Constitutional Court's desk.

And evicting people—or providing new houses—does not necessarily mean that they leave. In downtown Johannesburg, those who have lost their homes often move to the next derelict building to stay close to their livelihood. In Luanda, people are coaxed to leave their shacks and move to brand-new houses built by Chinese contractors, but many move quickly back into town. The new houses are too far out, with no adequate public transport, and they are sometimes built before water, electricity or schools get there.

Until the countryside offers a decent living, the lure of the city will remain, however awful the shanty-towns. And regardless of their dreams of gentrification, African cities need to make room in their centers for cheap housing for the poor. Otherwise, the shacks won't go away.

The article above represents a small part of what Bruce Sundquist indicates will be the overwhelming impact on developing country urban centers of the expected rural-to-urban migration of 4 billion people by mid century.
(<http://home.alltel.net/bsundquist1/ifp.html>)

Sex Education in Paraguay

by Graciela Jara de Villasanti - RFPD Country Chair for Paraguay

At the *Rotarian Action Group for Population & Development* meeting during the International Convention in Copenhagen, I presented a program that partners Rotarians from Paraguay with the Education Ministry of Paraguay. Rotarians have expressed interest in having the government involved in this issue.

From my position as Country Chair of RFPD, I led Rotarians in developing activities during 2006 in a project with the Education and Culture Ministry, and with the support of UNFPA. We worked on a project called "The Sexuality Education" involving Basic Scholar Education teachers. The goal of the project was to teach the teachers to educate children and young families on Sexuality.

The challenge was given to teachers of Educational Development of the Central Educational Regional. The Rotary Club of Ciudad del Este provided support. Matters addressed included:

- We are Sexual Beings.
- Sex, gender and sexuality.
- Our body image.
- Our body care and protection.
- Teen Pregnancy.
- STDs.
- HIV/AIDS.
- Domestic violence.
- Child abuse.
- Child sexual abuse.



The final topics specifically occur very frequently: pregnancies in young girls every day. That reality makes this education of the utmost importance. It was a beautiful experience to work with an aboriginal School in empowering women, and talking about abuse, but it was not without its complications. Before being able to talk with the women, we had to talk to the area Indian Chiefs, since in this culture it is delicate to broach certain topics. Some times it is not easy talk about family planning and spacing children because of the beliefs of the rural people. We hope that this Project can reach all of Paraguay. It can make a difference, "Leading the Way, Sharing Rotary."

RFPD US Assistant Zone Coordinator takes an Important Journey to INDIA:

On February 11, 2007, Elias Thomas (RFPD Assistant Zone Coordinator) joined members of the Rotary Club of Delhi-West, the oldest section of Delhi, where they participated in the NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION DAY (NID).

All children under the age of five years were brought to the sites, sometimes by a parent, and other times by an older sister or brother. When they reached the head of the line, the child gave his or her name (which was recorded in the ledger) and then was given two drops of life-saving vaccine on the tongue, the finger nail of the little finger on one hand was "painted" with gentian violet tincture, which stains the nail for a period of up to two weeks, so that over-enthusiastic children do not go to another site to have a second dose! The children are usually given a sticker for their shirts, and possibly a trinket from one of the members of the NID team from the USA.

The immunization is completed by mid-day, with follow-up operations of Rotarians going into the various neighborhoods to find children who did not show up for the immunization. Volunteers went house to house, knocking on the doors, seeking those children who did not present themselves at the NID. This is the only way that we can "break the chain" of passing the polio virus on to others. To read more about, visit Elias' blog at: <http://rotariansforhope-india2007.blogspot.com>.

JOIN RFPD!

To join RFPD, send US \$25 for Annual Membership or US \$100 for Lifetime Membership along with name, address, phone, fax, Rotary Club and District to address below if in North America. For other regions, please send to:

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Luis Serra,
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Charles Bull, *Webmaster*

Jennifer Hendrickson,
*Executive Director, RFPD &
Editor of **Fragile Earth***

For questions or comments on
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