

MAFIKENG DECLARATION ON

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA – RESEARCH AND POLICY DIALOGUE FOR ACTION

We, the population specialists, development activists and experts, researchers, academics, representatives of international and intergovernmental organizations, and policy makers who participated in the four-day conference (5-8 March 2007, in Mafikeng, South Africa) on *Population and Development in Africa - Research and Policy Dialogue for Action*;

Noting, with great satisfaction, the commendable efforts of the Government of South Africa, the African Population Commission of the African Union and the UNESCO, the UNFPA, North West University and the North West Provincial Government for their initiative to create the conditions and favourable environment for this conference to have taken place;

Appreciative of the organisers of the conference for the way in which it was arranged and conducted; and **further appreciative of** the contributions of all the conference participants, to enrich the discussion and enable the achievement of the conference objectives;

Recognizing the need for concerted efforts to address population and development in Africa, including capacity building, poverty and unemployment, gender and women's empowerment, reproductive health, mother and child health, STIs (particularly HIV & AIDS), migration and urbanisation, and the environment;

Desirous to share experiences and lessons that we have learnt on the value of dialogue between the population and development research community and policy makers, which includes governments, government agencies, intergovernmental organisations, development communities and multilateral organisations;

Recognizing that the role of dialogue in our policies and development endeavours cannot be over-emphasised;

Re-affirming the call in the Buenos Aires Declaration of the International Forum on the Social Science – Policy Nexus (IFSP) for a new approach to the social science – policy nexus (2006);

Having thoroughly discussed and analysed numerous case studies and voluntary contributions on successful dialogues between the population and development research community and policy makers.

1. We re-affirm our commitment to the implementation of:

- i. *The United Nations Millennium Declaration and its eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000);*
- ii. *The Programme of Action (PoA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) (1994), particularly its objectives*

“To promote the use of research findings to improve the formulation of policies and the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects that improve the welfare of individuals and families and the need to enhance their quality, efficiency and client-sensitivity, and to increase the national and international capacity for such research” (12.20);

and to

“... promote an effective partnership between all levels of government and the full range of non-governmental organisations and local community groups, in the discussion and decisions on the design, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of programmes relating to population, development and environment ...” (15.7);

- iii. *The Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development (1992), especially*

The principle that “the provision of training and research (in population and development) are essential ingredients to effective integration of population factors in development planning” (Principles and Objectives f);

and the call on African governments to

“ensure that training and research in population and development in African universities and research institutions are coordinated and the findings together with their implications effectively disseminated and brought to the attention of all concerned” (A 10 c);

and to

“strengthen regional institutes and enhance cooperation among African countries in the area of training, research and data collection” (A 10 d);

and the call on subregional and regional groupings to

“promote technical cooperation including the implementation of joint

subregional programmes in the field of research, training and environmental protection” (C a);

- iv. *The Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD (1999), including that*

“Governments, in collaboration with research institutions and non-governmental organisations, as well as with the assistance of the international community, including donors, should strengthen national information systems to produce reliable statistics on a broad range of population, environment and development indicators in a timely manner” (F 37);

- v. *The Ministerial Declaration of the ICPD at Ten Africa Regional Review (2004);*

- vi. *The resolutions of the Southern African Ministers’ Conference on Population and Development, endorsed by Southern African Development Community (SADC) (2004), including that*

“Member states should encourage dialogue between population researchers and government representatives, and promote collaborative research between and within countries in the region” (4.6.1).

2. We also agree that we will collectively and individually strive to:

- i. Promote capacity building for the integration of population factors and the mainstreaming of gender into development planning, including research, training on policy formulation and implementation, in collaboration with governments, civil society and academic institutions;
- ii. Ensure that sufficient expertise (through training and employment) and infrastructures are created in government departments (at all levels) to integrate population factors into development planning, policy formulation and implementation, through cooperation between governments, universities and other research organisations;
- iii. Encourage inter-institutional collaboration for population and development capacity building, and recognise the potential contribution from diverse disciplines to the functional integration of population factors into development planning;
- iv. Emphasise the need for both qualitative and quantitative, as well as multi-disciplinary research on population and development priorities, which would provide the evidence base for policy and enhance the direction of development strategies;

- v. Use the findings of credible research in programme and project development, and service delivery monitoring and evaluation;
- vi. Report research findings back to the communities from whom data were obtained, to inform local population and development planning;
- vii. Ensure that population research focuses on, and identifies solutions to, the socio-economic and environmental development challenges that women and men face at grassroots level, and their needs, as a contribution to building sustainable communities;
- viii. Promote collaboration between governments, civil society and researchers, to encourage the use of research and applied research, as source of knowledge, to inform the formulation of, and to monitor and evaluate policies that are aimed at the empowerment of people;
- ix. Allocate and mobilise sufficient resources and funds to population research (including monitoring and evaluating) activities and networks of importance to development, especially to alleviate poverty, as agreed in the MDGs;
- x. Stimulate dialogue on research in migration, urbanisation and development, and its patterns and differentials, for harmonised regional and local development plans and policies, in both rural and urban areas, with an emphasis on the opportunities offered by migration, whilst recognising the human rights of migrants;
- xi. Promote the collection, analysis, interpretation and sharing of migration data, and research the implications of migration for development and employment, especially the challenges and opportunities that it offers to households, women, youth and other vulnerable groups;
- xii. Urge governments and civil society organisations to cooperate in Information, Education and Communication and advocacy programmes, which are based on sound scientific knowledge, to promote behaviour change and the rights that are associated with the ICPD PoA, especially on gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- xiii. Promote access to and the use of various media and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), to support population and development programmes, projects and services, and address the factors that hinder women's access to ICT and the benefits offered by it;
- xiv. Increase media coverage on and involvement in population issues, and base it on factual, correct and verifiable information, balanced gender reporting, and sound ethics;

- xv. Integrate population factors into development planning, monitoring and evaluation at all levels. Specifically, the public sector and civil society should collaborate in community development programmes, including poverty alleviation, literacy, family planning, reproductive health and mother and child health services;
- xvi. Facilitate partnerships, research networks and knowledge exchange at local level between community members, governments (including local governments), researchers and local academic institutions, the private sector and other civil society organisations to address xenophobia, gender inequality and poverty, and to promote sustainable development;
- xvii. Support the African Population Commission to continue to play a leading role in encouraging effective partnerships between governments and civil society in carrying out activities on population and development matters, and the promotion of intergovernmental population and development fora and activities in the continent's regions;
- xviii. Promote South - South cooperation for the attainment of objectives of the ICPD PoA and the MDGs, including intergovernmental population and development strategies and programmes within Africa's regional development communities;
- xix. Capacitate the African Union Commission to engage the population and development research community to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ICPD PoA, the MDGs and NEPAD;
- xx. Resolve and manage conflicts collectively, with due regard to their historical and socio-economic root causes, and their demographic consequences and impact on women and children, whilst taking cognisance of the human rights of displaced populations, refugees and asylum seekers;
- xxi. Strengthen databases and develop capacity to monitor and evaluate the impact of population and development and related programmes at the continental, regional, national and local level, whilst improving the theoretical and methodological base for assessing the impact of programmes and projects, particularly as far as their demographic and gender dimensions are concerned;
- xxii. Engage constructively with each other at conferences and other scientific fora, to exchange knowledge and experiences that will strengthen population research and training, and development programmes across the continent;
- xxiii. Involve political leaders, government officials, academics, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, civic society and trade unions

in population and development research – policy fora, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

- xxiv. Emphasise the value of, and encourage multi – disciplinary research for effective sexual and reproductive health strategies and programmes, including the prevention and management of STIs (including HIV & AIDS);
- xxv. Promote, strengthen and support dialogue to enhance mother and child health programmes and access thereto, through research, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, advocacy and IEC, resource mobilisation, intergovernmental programmes and service delivery;
- xxvi. Document and share examples of good practices in capacity building; poverty eradication and employment creation; women’s empowerment; reproductive health, and mother and child health services; and HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support;
- xxvii. Ensure the implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (African Union, 2006).

8 March 2007

Declaration adopted by acclamation in the closing session of the conference on:

***Population and Development in Africa –
Research and Policy Dialogue for Action,***

held in Mafikeng, South Africa, on 5 – 8 March 2007