

**REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH,
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH
AND FAMILY PLANNING: THE
INVERSE RELATIONSHIP OF
NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH
INCOME AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

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- ⦿ “The more, the merrier” and “cheaper by the dozen” are not prescriptions for development.
- ⦿ No sustainable development if population problem remains unresolved.
- ⦿ Our projected population of 94 million this year is not only menacing but ominously explosive.

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

- ◉ Unbridled population growth stunts socio-economic development, aggravates poverty and demeans quality of life.
- ◉ UNFPA: “family planning and reproductive health are essential to reducing poverty” and “countries that invest in reproductive health and family planning and in women's development register slower population growth and faster economic growth”.
- ◉ Family Income and Expenditures Surveys (FIES) 1985 to 2000: poverty incidence steadily increases with each additional child in the family.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- 1. High fertility impacts negatively on the lives of women.
 - ❖ Multiparity is positively associated with maternal mortality.
 - ❖ 11 women die each day in the Philippines from pregnancy and childbirth.
 - ❖ WHO, UNFPA and Lancet: correct and consistent use of contraceptives can help prevent as much as 35% of all maternal deaths.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- **2. High fertility impacts negatively on the lives of children.**
 - ❖ Children from large families are at greater risk of living in poverty.
 - ❖ They suffer from poor health.
 - ❖ Their educational opportunities are limited.
 - ❖ They are more likely to suffer from poor nutrition and substandard childcare.
 - ❖ They do not perform as well in school compared to children from small families.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- ◉ **3. High fertility adversely affects quality of life - even across generations.**
 - ❖ Orbeta: large family size “has been identified as the main mechanism of the inter-generational transmission of poverty.”
 - ❖ Lack of education, poor nutrition and general ill-health plague large families.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- ◎ **4. Large family size is a primary factor in low household savings.**
 - ❖ Households with one child devote 10% of expenditures to childrearing.
 - ❖ Allocation for children jumps to 18% with a second child.
 - ❖ Allocations increase to 26% for four children.
 - ❖ Large families virtually have no savings.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- ⑤ **5. Large families are more vulnerable to external economic shocks.**
 - ❖ Without adequate savings, large families are ill-prepared loss of employment or sickness or disability.
 - ❖ They have more difficulty coping with the unexpected.
 - ❖ They lack the buffer funds needed to tide them over hard times.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- 6. Large number of children is associated with decrease in average incomes and less investment in human capital.
 - ❖ Education spending per student per year drops from P1,787 for a family of 4 to P682 for a family size of 9 and above.
 - ❖ Average health spending per sick family member falls from P1,464 to P756 over the same family size range.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HIGH FERTILITY AND LARGE FAMILY SIZE:

- ◉ **7. Rapid population growth and high fertility impact negatively on economic growth.**
 - ❖ Population and poverty are intertwined in a vicious cycle.
 - ❖ Excessive population growth worsens poverty
 - ❖ Poverty spawns rapid population growth.
 - ❖ This negative tandem is called the “low level equilibrium trap”.

RH IS ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOPMENT, OVERALL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- ⦿ RH is essential to women's and children's overall health.
- ⦿ RH and FP reduce maternal and infant mortality and improve the health status of mothers and children.
- ⦿ Contraceptive use leads a marked decrease in maternal death.

RH IS ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOPMENT, OVERALL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- UNFPA: “saving a mother’s life means saving the life of her newborn and that of her older children.”
- Children with no mothers are up to 10x more likely to die prematurely.
- Preventing maternal death through effective family planning is a significant step in protecting children.

LOWER FERTILITY WOULD MEAN MORE EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

- ◉ Lower fertility will give women more opportunities to finish their education and secure productive work.
- ◉ Lower fertility frees women to pursue opportunities that will enhance their social and economic status and that of their families.

FROM VICIOUS CYCLE TO VIRTUOUS CYCLE: CHILDREN REAP THE BENEFITS OF THEIR MOTHERS' FAMILY PLANNING DECISIONS

- ◉ Women who use FP are able to give their children better childcare and education and ensure that they are better-fed and healthy.
- ◉ As adults, these children will also be better prepared to manage their own fertility, be more responsible parents themselves and be productive citizens.
- ◉ They can ensure a better future for their own children.

- ◉ To jumpstart the virtuous cycle, Congress must pass the RH bill.
- ◉ RH, FP, population and human development must be components of government's development and poverty alleviation programs.
- ◉ RH and FP will have positive multiplier effects on the lives poor mothers and their children.

Thank you.