

# OUR PLANET, OURSELVES

BALANCING WORLD POPULATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Produced by the Izaak Walton League of America's Sustainability Education Project

# OUR PLANET, OURSELVES

**Written by** *Mia MacDonald*

**Edited by** *Jason McGarvey, Jim Baird, Will Lebzelter*

**Design by** *Jay Clark*

BALANCING WORLD POPULATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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Funding for this guide has been provided by the **Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund** and the **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation**.

The author and editors would like to acknowledge the following people for their important contributions to the development of this guide: Paul Brant, Dale Brentnall, and Christy Sandru, with the Izaak Walton League's Carrying Capacity Resource Committee; Jim Mosher, the League's Conservation Director; and Tom Gardner-Outlaw, Natural Resources Policy Analyst at Population Action International. Research assistance and key data were kindly provided by Kelvin Pollard of the Population Reference Bureau.

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For more information about the Sustainability Education Project, to join our grassroots network, or to request additional copies of this *Action Guide*, contact:



**Izaak Walton League of America**

**707 Conservation Lane**

**Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2983**

**Phone: (301) 548-0150; Fax: (301) 548-0149**

**E-mail: [sustain@iwla.org](mailto:sustain@iwla.org) Web site: [www.iwla.org](http://www.iwla.org)**



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# ABOUT THIS GUIDE AND THE CAIRO PROGRAM OF ACTION

This *Action Guide* is part of a publication series of the Izaak Walton League of America's Sustainability Education Project (SEP). Published each fall, the *Action Guide* is designed to raise awareness of population and consumption issues and to suggest what individuals can do to address them.

Chief among the challenges of the 21st century are growing human populations, rising consumption levels, and the urgent need to produce goods and services in ways that do not degrade the Earth's natural resources and systems. One of our best opportunities to meet these challenges is the "Program of Action" agreed to at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994. The Cairo Program is a common-sense plan that invests in people and considers meeting their health and development needs the key to stabilizing the world's population. This *Action Guide* provides the following:

- An overview of the Cairo Program and an introductory letter from the Izaak Walton League.
- Three information sections: *Our Reproductive Health: Healthy Lives for a Healthy Planet*; *Our Youth: Education and Involvement are the Key*; and *Our Economic Opportunities: Development with Equal Access for Women*. Each section examines one major component of the Cairo Program with an overview of the issues, relevant facts, short case studies, and ideas for action.
- Three postcards to sign and send to your Senators and Representatives. (*Contact SEP if you need additional cards*).
- A set of resource materials to support readers in their own education, outreach, and activism on population and sustainability issues.

## About the Cairo Program

The Cairo Program arose from a global consensus among representatives from 179 countries, as well as from the Vatican. The program puts an end to the concept of "population control." More than 30 years of worldwide experience has shown that when women's opportunities and choices are expanded, they generally have fewer children than their mothers before them. The program approaches population stabilization by providing choices and opportunities, not through coercion and control.

The program calls for countries to provide all people with access to basic services, including quality health care for women and children, education, and expanded economic opportunities. These are investments in human potential that most Americans would consider basic rights. The great news out of Cairo is that such steps also lead to more sustainable population growth. The Cairo Program is as relevant in industrialized countries as it is in developing nations. In North America, Europe, Latin America, Africa, and elsewhere, couples have chosen to have smaller families when their basic needs are met.

This program explicitly addresses the need for ecosystem health and conservation. It calls for producing goods and consuming them in ways that minimize environmental impact and maximize sustainability. The Cairo consensus brings together the concerns of conservationists, supporters of economic development, and advocates for equal economic and legal rights for women.



## LETTER FROM THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE

Historically, issues of population, consumption, and environment have been viewed and addressed in isolation. Overpopulation was something happening “over there,” while here in the United States we actively sought increased consumption and economic growth. (“What’s good for General Motors is good for the country!”) Population and consumption were seldom linked to global environmental problems.

But all human activities have environmental impacts. We consume natural resources as food, fuel, and products. We produce wastes and release them back into the air, water, and soil. Each additional person increases the demand on resources. Yet the relationship between population and environment is more complex. It is the combination of human numbers with levels of consumption that determines the ecological impact of individuals and societies.

Since 1948, the Izaak Walton League has recognized that, ultimately, there is no greater threat to natural resources than the demands of a growing human population. In 1970, our members passed a resolution on population that has stood as a core component of our conservation policy.

Still, not all League members and supporters are of one mind when it comes to addressing the population issue. We have lacked a practical response to those who say, “I understand the link between population and environmental problems, but what can I do about it and remain faithful to personal and organizational values?” The Sustainability Education Project has endeavored to answer this question, and in this *Action Guide* we take an important step forward.

The breakthrough of the Cairo Program, and the reason it is the focus of this guide, is its recognition that activities not usually associated with population or environment are, in reality, central to each. Providing adequate health care, education, economic opportunity and equality for women — aims we need to work for anyway — has a demonstrable impact on population growth and sustainability. Using the Cairo Program as its point of departure, this guide offers many new possibilities for effective action. It outlines steps that can fit individual conscience, and from which League members and supporters can choose depending on their level of commitment and comfort.

Finding practical ways to act is imperative. Since September 1999, when the League’s last *Action Guide* — *Conservation in a World of Six Billion* — was published, world population has increased by another 95 million — the size of Germany and New York City combined.<sup>1</sup> At least 27,000 animal and plant species have been lost to extinction<sup>2</sup>, and more than 100,000 acres of U.S. wetlands have been lost to sprawl.<sup>3</sup>

Today, at least 800 million people in developing nations lack access to modern health services, nearly 1.5 billion do not have clean water<sup>4</sup>, and 20 percent of children do not attend school beyond 5th grade.<sup>5</sup> How will these countries provide for further growth and still protect the environment? And here at home, our numbers and consumption patterns are fueling sprawl, fouling air and water, bringing ecologically fragile lands into production, and increasing energy use.

If we act now to slow population growth by investing in human potential, we *can* leave a better world for future generations. Providing for everyone without draining the Earth’s resources is a fundamental goal of the Izaak Walton League of America. We invite you to read on and to join us in this critical task.

Sincerely,

**Dale Brentnall**, *Past IWLA National President and Carrying Capacity Resource Committee Chairman*

**Jim Baird**, *Director, Sustainability Education Project*

# CAIRO 101: A PROGRAM OF ACTION

At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt (and during the three years of talks leading up to it), 179 countries agreed on a 20-year plan to balance human population and the Earth's resources. The conference's "Program of Action" outlines concrete goals and actions to bring about stabilization of the world's population and human and economic development. It calls on us to expand people's choices, especially women's; provide individuals with the means to maximize their potential; promote equity between women and men; and end practices that endanger the environment on which our lives and livelihoods depend.

## What is the program's approach?

The Cairo Program notes that while population growth is slowing, it continues to increase, posing serious threats to the environment, economic development, and quality of life. The program also recognizes that unsustainable levels and patterns of consumption and production have direct negative impacts on ecosystems. In its response to these concerns, the program is holistic, recognizing a range of factors that interact in complex ways. It states, *"Efforts to slow down population growth, to reduce poverty, to achieve economic progress, to improve environmental protection, and to reduce unsustainable consumption and production patterns are mutually reinforcing."* (Cairo Program of Action, Chapter 3, Paragraph 14)



The program is also inclusive — written for use in industrialized and developing countries alike. The actions called for are designed to meet the needs of everyone in a community. But the Cairo Program emphasizes those people who need services, care, skills, and opportunities most. Investing in the neediest individuals and communities will have the greatest positive impact on all people, both in poor countries like Cambodia and Malawi and in wealthy ones like Germany and the United States.

## What needs to be done?

Making tangible progress toward the Cairo Program's goals both in the United States and abroad means:

- ensuring that all individuals can have children by choice, not chance, through good reproductive health care (see page 10 for a full definition of this term), including family planning services;
- offering people, particularly women, ways of providing for their families through good educational systems and economic opportunities;
- investing time and resources in developing the potential of youth — more than two billion of whom are under the age of 20 — through education, skills training, mentoring, and activities that build self-esteem and self-reliance;
- promoting the equality and empowerment of women in the home and workplace through national laws and policies that, for instance, guarantee equal pay for equal work; and

## Commitments made in 1994

*At the International Conference on Population and Development, 179 countries, including the United States, agreed on a Program of Action that:*

- calls for reproductive health care (see page 10 for a full definition of this term) and family planning services to be universally available by 2015;
- urges adoption of economic, social, and education policies that will help the Cairo Program meet its goals, including universal primary education, debt reduction, and women's access to economic resources;
- applies human rights principles to population policies and programs;
- states that gender equity and equality are essential for sustainable development, and encourages men to be full and responsible partners in sexual and reproductive health and family life; and
- asserts that both stabilizing population growth and changing production and consumption patterns are central to reducing environmental degradation and poverty.

Source: *Meeting the Cairo Challenge: A Summary Report*. Family Care International, New York, 1999.





## CAIRO 101: A PROGRAM OF ACTION

■ Using individual action and government policies to change current ways of producing and consuming goods and services that exert high environmental costs and slow progress toward sustainability.

All of these actions — not just one or two — are critical for stabilizing the human population. But as investments, they also create sustainable societies in which individuals can reach their full potential. Although the need for basic services is greatest in developing countries, millions of Americans — our friends, families, and neighbors — stand to benefit from the Cairo Program, too. Those people who are poor or “at risk” of poverty, teen pregnancy, malnutrition, violence in schools or homes, inadequate education and skills, and poor health insurance would all feel the positive effects of these actions. Indeed, the United States, which has the highest average income of all the industrialized nations, also has the highest percentage of people living in poverty — 17 percent.<sup>6</sup> For them, the potential impact of the Cairo Program is vast.

### Will it work?

Evidence indicates that it will. More than 30 years of research and experience in developing and developed countries alike shows that healthy, educated women who have some measure of economic power choose to have fewer children. The research also shows that when children have the opportunity to be healthy, educated, and employed, parents are more likely to choose smaller families. This is what happened in the 20th century in the United States, Europe, Japan, and Australia. Health care improved the likelihood of children surviving to adulthood. Men and women received more education and economic opportunities. And women’s choices about motherhood and employment expanded. All of these advances have contributed to lowering the average number of children a woman in the United States will give birth to over a lifetime, from an average of 3.3 between 1960 and 1965 to just under two children per woman today.<sup>7,8</sup>

Developing countries that have made investments in line with the Cairo Program have seen positive outcomes as well. For decades, the government of Sri Lanka has placed a high priority on improving health, education, and the status of women. As a result, 88 percent of women in Sri Lanka are now literate, rates of death during pregnancy are among the lowest in the developing world, 66 percent of women use modern contraceptives, and women now have an average of 2.3 children — down significantly from the 5.1 births per woman recorded between 1960 and 1965.<sup>7,9</sup>

### Population growth: policy and values

The IWLA’s conservation policy says:

*“The League urges governments and private agencies to conduct scientific research and to encourage policies, attitudes, social standards, and programs that will — through voluntary actions consistent with human rights and individual conscience — bring about the stabilization of the human population ... The League supports the right of the individual to choose freely methods of fertility control consistent with the dictates of individual conscience and accepted medical practice. The League neither advocates nor opposes abortion.” (1970, 1976)*

Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), says about the Cairo Program:

*“It is possible to solve our population problems while at the same time respecting and nurturing human rights. Indeed, neither can be achieved without promoting the other ... In [the Program of Action] practicality meets morality: needs for individual empowerment coincide with the demands of societal and global development.” (1999)*

*“Unlike white-tailed deer that outstrip available food supplies with no knowledge of the future, we are capable of anticipating and averting economic, social, and environmental collapse. As our population growth and resource use exceeds the environment’s carrying capacity, our ingenuity will be challenged like never before ... ”*

— **Paul Hansen, Executive Director,**  
**Izaak Walton League of America**

# CAIRO 101: A PROGRAM OF ACTION

## Where does the Cairo Program stand today?

In 1999, an international review looked at how far the Cairo Program's goals had advanced since 1994. Overall, the progress reported was encouraging. New policies and laws have been enacted in numerous countries, including the United States. Greater equality between women and men is being seen in schooling, economic opportunity, and political participation. Partnerships among governments, non-profit organizations, and international agencies are delivering a full range of reproductive health information and services that better meet people's needs. And in many countries, new programs have been launched to meet the needs of adolescents for reproductive health education and care, literacy programs, and job training.

Despite evidence that the Cairo Program works, the financial resources and the political will necessary to deliver on its full promise are still not sufficient. The industrialized nations agreed to provide one-third of the funds to implement the Program's agenda globally, with developing countries contributing two-thirds. By 1999, developing countries were meeting 70 percent of their financial commitment. However, industrialized nations were only one-quarter of the way to meeting their obligations. The total shortfall for the year 2000 may be as much as \$10 billion.<sup>10,11</sup>

## What is the United States' role?

The United States is the largest donor to international population programs. Still, it ranks last among industrialized nations in the percentage of its gross national product that it spends on development assistance. In addition, funding for international family planning programs has not been popular in the U.S. Congress. Despite commitments made in Cairo, U.S. funding for international population programs has fallen sharply since 1995.<sup>10,11</sup> In fiscal year 1999, funding was cut off entirely for the United Nations Population Fund — a major source of financial and technical assistance for developing countries — before being restored in fiscal year 2000. The Clinton Administration's 2001 budget request called for international population assistance funding to be restored to its 1995 level of \$542 million. Congressional approval is perennially uncertain.



*“The stakes could hardly be higher. If only we could implement the Cairo Program in full, we could make a tremendous difference to human rights, to hopes of prosperity, and to the sustainable use of natural resources. We must do it. But we cannot do it without funds.”*

— Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General



## Our Reproductive Health: Healthy Lives for a Healthy Planet

Central to the Cairo Program's blueprint for action is ensuring universal access to quality reproductive health care information and services. The goal is to ensure that having children is safe, healthy, and an individual choice.

What does the term "reproductive health" refer to? Essentially, reproductive health means that women, in partnership with men, can conceive, safely give birth to, and nurture healthy infants when and if they choose to do so, while remaining free of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and reproductive illness (such as cervical cancer).

### What is reproductive health care?

Here at home, reproductive health care includes routine gynecological exams throughout a woman's life. It involves regular prenatal checkups for pregnant women, professional care during childbirth, and postnatal visits to provide immunizations and offer advice on newborn care, breastfeeding, and infant nutrition. Reproductive health care also includes educating women and men about their options for family planning, including modern contraceptives, and educating young people about reproduction, sexuality, personal hygiene, and prevention and treatment of STDs. In short, reproductive health care covers a range of services that nearly 100 million American girls and women participate in as a matter of course. Ensuring reproductive health is the job of obstetricians, gynecologists, labor and delivery nurses, midwives, pediatricians and health counselors. Most Americans start receiving care from these health professionals in early adolescence. Reproductive health

care is both an American and an international concept. Compare the set of services the Cairo Program includes in its definition of "reproductive health care" to the set of services just described (*see box*).

Evidence also shows that reproductive health care can reduce abortion rates. In Russia, for instance, the number of abortions dropped nearly 30 percent between 1990 and 1994 after the availability of services went up.<sup>12</sup>

### The Cairo Program's definition of reproductive health care includes:

- family planning information, counseling, and services;
- prenatal, postnatal, and delivery care;
- health care for infants;
- prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and reproductive tract infections (RTIs);
- prevention and treatment of infertility;
- information, education and counseling on human sexuality, reproductive health and parenthood; and
- legal, safe abortion services and management of abortion-related complications.

If additional services, such as diagnosis and treatment of breast and reproductive system cancers and STDs are not offered, a referral system should be in place.

Source: "Sexual and Reproductive Health Briefing Cards: Rights-based Approach to Reproductive Health." Family Care International, New York, 2000.

*"[The objectives include ensuring] that comprehensive and factual information and a full range of reproductive health care services, including family planning, are accessible, affordable, acceptable, and convenient to all users ... The success (of these programs) in a variety of settings demonstrates that informed individuals everywhere can and will act responsibly in light of their own needs and those of their families and communities."*

— Cairo Program of Action, Chapter 7, Paragraphs 5 and 12

### Izaak Walton League conservation policy:

*"Government and private efforts should include but not be limited to ... support of national and international efforts to stabilize population through funding for family planning and promoting equality between men and women."*

# HEALTHY LIVES FOR A HEALTHY PLANET



## High fertility, disease, and death: The result of unmet needs

Although the majority of women in industrialized nations take reproductive health care for granted, the need for care among millions of poor women is far from being met. Poor women and children face many health risks that could be prevented, and fertility among poor populations remains higher than wanted. For example, more than one-third of all pregnancies throughout the world — 75 million each year — are not sought or desired, including three million unintended pregnancies a year in the United States.<sup>13</sup> At least 350 million couples around the world lack information about and access to a full range of contraceptive services.<sup>13,14</sup> This number will continue to grow as populations increase.

Even in the United States, not all women who want family planning or other reproductive health care have access to it, due to cost or availability. Health insurance coverage for contraceptive services lags far behind coverage for obstetric care, abortion and sterilization. About half of all private large-group health plans do not routinely cover the costs of any contraceptive methods, although 97 percent of them cover other kinds of prescription drugs (including Viagra). This is the case despite the fact that, on average, it would cost an employer only \$1.43 per month to add full contraceptive benefits to an employee's health plan.<sup>15</sup>

## Case Study: Ecuador and Jamaica

In Ecuador, a project was launched by the non-profit organization, CEMOPLAF, to join reproductive health services with agricultural and resource management efforts in a number of poor, rural communities. The goal was to better meet people's needs, as well as increase use of health clinic facilities. Outcomes included active involvement by community members in both agricultural and health activities. In addition, awareness of family planning rose from 35 percent to 78 percent and use of modern contra-

ceptive methods increased from 12 percent to 41 percent. Another beneficial outcome was that community members reported positive attitudes toward the project, and said they would continue to use the reproductive health services the clinics provide.

The Family Planning Association of Jamaica (FAMPLAN) has launched a program to improve the information and services available to youth in a rural part of the country, concentrating on education and counseling while also providing reproductive health services. A key component of the program is FAMPLAN's Youth Resource Center. Located near the health clinic, the center offers literacy classes and skills training for employment and entrepreneurship, individual and group counseling, a telephone hot line, support groups, and social and cultural activities.

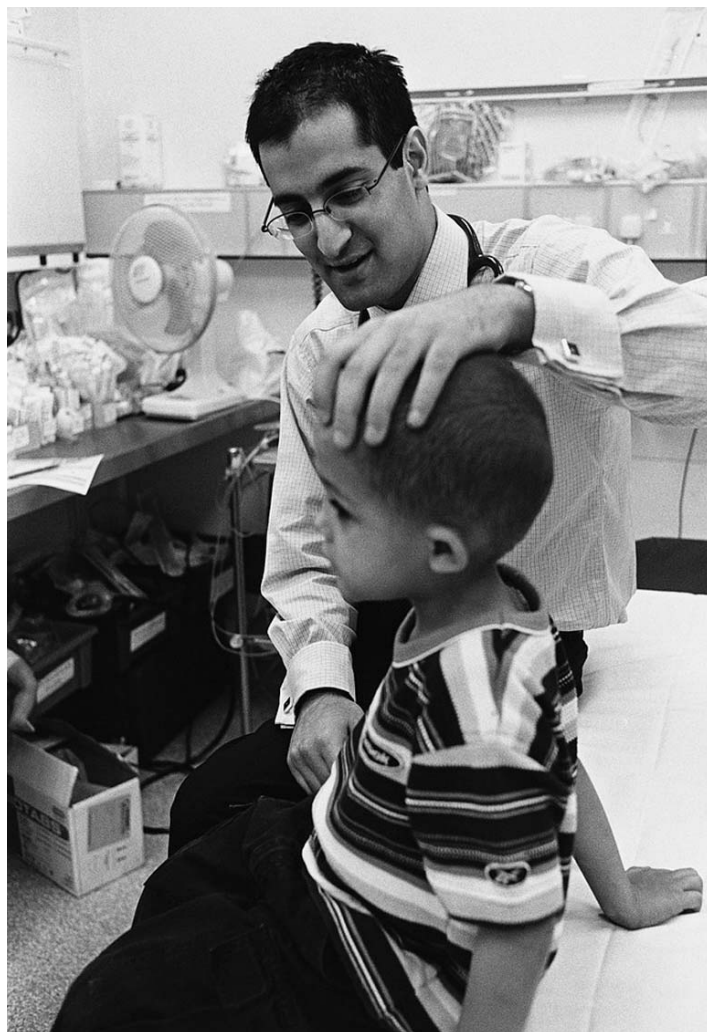
Sources: *Ecuador: Forging the Link: Emerging Accounts of Population and Environment Work in Communities*. Population Action International, Washington, D.C., 1999; *Jamaica: Meeting the Cairo Challenge: Progress in Sexual and Reproductive Health*. Family Care International, New York, 1999.



## OUR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

*“We must prioritize sexual and reproductive health services not only for the best technical quality, but also [to] improve full information and choices, and treat women with respect ...”*

**– Dr. Pascoal Mocumbi,  
Prime Minister, Mozambique**



Along with lack of access to modern methods of family planning, women throughout the world face terrible consequences when a full range of reproductive health care services is not available or affordable. Because such services are still rare in many parts of the developing world, every day at least 1,600 mothers die from complications resulting from pregnancy or childbirth. Almost all of these deaths are preventable. Women in Asia have a 1-in-65 chance of dying from pregnancy, while women in Africa face even worse odds — a 1-in-16 risk of dying. Although childbirth in the United States is not risk free, it is much safer, with women in North America having a 1-in-3,700 chance of death from pregnancy.<sup>16</sup>

Care during pregnancy and childbirth is still scarce in developing countries. Only 65 percent of women in such countries receive prenatal care, and fewer than 30 percent get postnatal care. Almost half of all births take place without the assistance of a trained professional (doctor, nurse, midwife), and some women even give birth alone.<sup>17</sup> In addition, more than 11 million children under the age of five die each year,<sup>18</sup> many in infancy, largely due to the preventable causes that kill their mothers. Women and their children also face risks from STDs. Every day, more than one million people are infected with a curable STD,<sup>19</sup> and 15,000 men, women, and children are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.<sup>20</sup>

### Investing in young people's health

More than one billion young people around the world are entering their reproductive years. They will be facing decisions about whether and when to have children, and how many to have. This last decision will determine whether or not population is stabilized and sustainability is achieved in the 21st century.

In countries large and small, women and men in their teens and early 20s are expressing a desire for later childbearing and smaller families — aspirations that, if met, will expand opportunities for both them and us to live healthy lives on a healthy planet.<sup>21</sup>

The Cairo Program shows us how to achieve this goal. First, we must meet adolescents' needs for information and education to help them understand the realities of reproduction, sexuality, childbearing, prevention of STDs, and sexual abuse, as well as equitable relationships between women and men, along with their choices (including abstinence). Second, we need to ensure access to age-appropriate reproductive health care and counseling.

Throughout the world, most men and women become sexually active during adolescence. However, most young people, including a large number in the

## HEALTHY LIVES FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

United States, lack accurate knowledge about reproduction and sexuality, and do not have access to reproductive health information or services.<sup>22</sup> The results are as predictable as they are avoidable. Globally, 10 percent of all babies are born to adolescent women, and pregnancy-related complications are among the major causes of death for girls ages 15–19.<sup>23,24</sup> The United States is no exception. Although teen pregnancy rates are down by 20 percent from their 1980 levels, 12.6 percent of all births in the United States are to teens. Teenagers also have nearly 20 percent of all abortions in the United States, although the numbers are falling.<sup>25</sup>

Internationally, one out of every 20 adolescents contracts an STD every year, putting them at high risk for HIV (with half of all new HIV infections taking place among the 10–24 age group).<sup>26</sup> Infection rates for chlamydia — one of the four most common, curable STDs — are rising among U.S. adolescents by nearly four percent a year, and more than half of all reported chlamydia infections in the United States occur in young people ages 15–24.<sup>27</sup>

The good news is that young people are smart and responsive. Whether in San Antonio or Casablanca, if we take the time to inform adolescents about the realities of sexuality and reproduction, more often than not they will make good, healthy choices. Indeed, studies conducted in a number of countries show that adolescents who receive reproductive health information and services are more likely to delay sexual activity and have fewer sexual partners. They are also less likely to engage in risky sexual behaviors, have unplanned pregnancies, or contract an STD.<sup>28</sup>

In the United States, teenagers' attitudes and actions are changing in positive directions — as the Cairo Program anticipates. The number of U.S. high school students who have sex is falling, from 54 percent in 1991 to 50 percent in 1999. Also, condom use is up among sexually active teens; 58 percent of sexually active teens used condoms in 1999 as opposed to 46 percent in 1991. This is true for both boys and girls, and among Caucasian, African-American, and Hispanic teens.<sup>29</sup> Researchers suggest a number of reasons why U.S. teens are choosing to delay sex or

### The payoff of investments in reproductive health globally and at home

Globally, leading researchers have estimated the positive impacts of the proposed \$169 million increase in the 2001 U.S. budget for international population assistance. If the funds are used in the same ways as past funds, and if costs of providing services remain the same, the following would be the results:

- 11.7 million more couples in developing countries will have access to and use a modern method of contraception;
- 1.5 million fewer unintended births;
- 2.2 million fewer abortions;
- 0.5 million fewer miscarriages each year;
- 7,000 fewer deaths from pregnancy-related causes other than induced abortion; and
- 8,000 fewer deaths from unsafe abortions.

In the U.S., Title X funding that provides publicly subsidized family planning services has positive impacts, too. Each year, due to services it provides:

- 1.3 million fewer unintended pregnancies;
- 632,300 fewer abortions;
- 385,800 fewer unintended pregnancies among American teenagers; and
- 154,700 fewer teenage births.

With increased funding, as called for in the 2001 budget, Title X services would be accessible to even more American women and teenagers, with increased positive impacts.

Sources: *International population assistance: "Potential Impact of Increased Family Planning Funding on the Lives of Women & Their Families Overseas."* Population Action International, et. al., Washington, D.C., 2000. U.S.; *Title X funding: "America's Family Planning Program: Title X."* Fact Sheet. Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Washington, D.C., 2000.





## OUR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

have protected sex: increased motivation to gain education, job skills, and economic stability before starting a family; increases and improvements in sex education, leading to better knowledge about contraception; and greater social support for services that prevent pregnancy and disease among adolescents.<sup>30</sup>

### Honoring our commitments to the Cairo Program

Although progress has been made in expanding the availability of reproductive health care, services still fall short of people's needs. One reason is that funding from industrialized nations for the investments called for in the Cairo Program is below what was promised. The gap between funds and needs becomes bigger each year. U.S. assistance to international population programs is down nearly one-third from 1995 levels. For fiscal year 2001, the administration requested an increase of \$169 million (about 3 cents a week for every American, less than 0.02 percent of the federal budget.<sup>31</sup> With this increase, total funding for such programs would return to the 1995 level, and the impact of such an increase on the lives of women and children throughout the developing world would be tremendous (*see box on previous page*).

In the United States, increases in funding and changes in policies are also needed to ensure that Americans have universal access to reproductive health and family planning services, as called for in the Cairo Program. Title X is the U.S. government program that provides reproductive health services, including family planning, to poor women who do not have private insurance that covers the costs (*see box on previous page*). Each year, more than four million American women receive services at family planning clinics funded by Title X; approximately 60 percent have incomes below the federal poverty level. For 80 percent of these women, the Title X-funded clinics are their only source of reproductive health care and family planning services. Still, the program's funding has declined 60 percent in real terms between 1980 and 1999. In fiscal year 2001, President Clinton called for a \$35 million increase in Title X funding.<sup>31</sup>

The Cairo Program offers an international mandate for expanding access to reproductive health care and family planning services for everybody. This "reproductive health approach" is humane, pragmatic, and cost effective. The costs of providing reproductive health care are remarkably low: just \$3 per person each year would provide women in poor countries with family planning, care during and after pregnancy, and care for newborns.<sup>32</sup> If we act, the results will be healthier mothers and children, smaller families, and, ultimately, reduced environmental pressure.







## Health and Reproductive Health Care

Below are actions you can take to ensure that quality reproductive health care is available to every person in the United States and abroad. Also refer to the Resources section in the back of this guide for more specific information on putting the following suggestions into practice.

### At the individual level:

- Make a donation or volunteer time to a charity in your area that provides health services that fit with your individual conscience.
- Encourage your insurance company and your employer to add contraception and other reproductive health care services coverage to your health care plan.
- Make sure that the teenagers in your life have all the factual information they need to make healthy decisions. Talk to them about reproductive health and sexuality, or help them to obtain information and advice from sources you trust (such as religious professionals, school nurses, teacher and counselors, staff at local youth centers, health professionals, etc.)

### At the community level:

- Work to make your community a place where the life choices for young people are expanded, so that early childbearing and marriage are not viewed as the only options.
- Open a dialogue with young people about what they need and want from sexuality education programs, and work to integrate their ideas into new or existing efforts.
- Become familiar with “Kids Count” statistics for your community. This annually updated data bank provides key indicators for every U.S. state on the well-being of young children and teens. (Please refer to the Resources section, under Education and Youth Development, for contact information.)

### At the policy level:

- Support increased funding for U.S. international family planning assistance by organizing a Congressional postcard or e-mail campaign.
- Support increased funding for the Title X program to ensure that all American women have access to quality reproductive health care, including family planning. Tell your representatives in Congress your views.
- Support legislation and policies that encourage insurance plans to cover contraceptive services.



## SECTION II OUR YOUTH

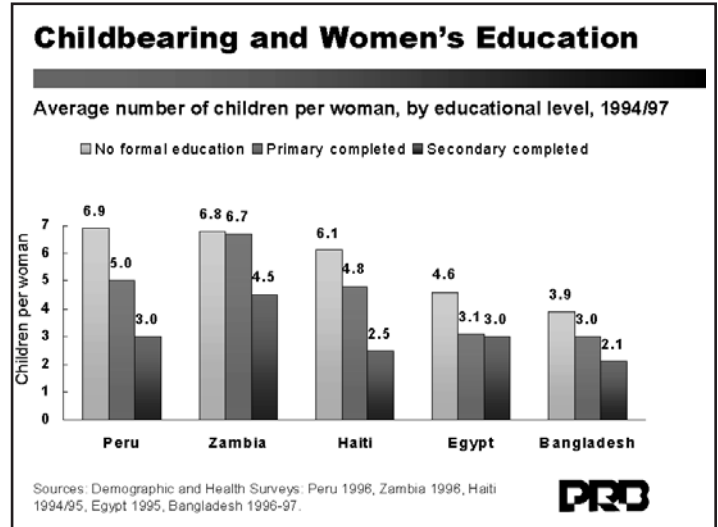
### Our Youth: Education and Involvement are Key

The links between education and youth development on the one hand, and population stabilization and sustainable societies on the other, may not seem obvious at first. But with a little digging, the connections become obvious. Education allows young people to learn about the world, to get the skills and confidence to build careers and nurture families, and to think critically about the impact of their actions. For generations of Americans and people around the world, education has been and continues to be a way to move out of poverty and gain a foothold in the middle class. On the demographic side, people who have a high school education — women in particular — get married and have children later in life than those who are not educated. They also have fewer children, and the children they have are healthier and better educated than the children of parents who lack schooling.<sup>33,34</sup> In addition, schools can teach kids about the relationships between population, development, reproductive health, and sustainability.

However, nearly one billion people are entering the 21st century without the ability to write. Two-thirds of these people are women.<sup>33</sup> The Cairo Program calls for universal access to quality education, recognizing that combating poverty and tapping the potential of each individual are essential to restoring the environment and building strong, healthy societies. The program also urges parents, teachers, community members, organizations, businesses, and governments to invest their time, skills, and caring to help young people become happy, healthy, loved, and productive adults.

#### Schools: A critical investment

Experience over the past 30 years suggests that education, especially for women, is perhaps the best invest-



Source: *THE POPULATION STORY: PRESENTATION GUIDE*, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC, 1999.

ment countries can make to promote social and economic development, as well as to reduce population growth rates. Education helps boys and girls increase their self-esteem and expand their life options. Educated women, in particular, are more likely to seek higher education, get a skilled job, or start a business. They are also more able to choose when to get married and have children, as well as decide how many children to have.<sup>33,34</sup> The link between the amount of education a woman receives and her fertility is striking (*see chart above*). In country after country, as the number of years of schooling for women increases, the number of children women have decreases.<sup>35</sup>

#### Unmet needs in education

Despite these enormous payoffs, at least 73 million girls and 52 million boys in developing countries do

*“Education is an indispensable tool for the improvement of the quality of life ... [and] a key factor in sustainable development ... ”*

— **Cairo Program of Action, Chapter 11, Paragraphs 1 and 2**

*“... Children are the most important resource for the future and ... greater investments in them by parents and societies are essential to the achievement of sustained economic growth and development.”*

— **Cairo Program of Action, Chapter 6, Paragraph 6**

## EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT ARE KEY

*“Every child deserves and must receive a quality education. Because when you give a quality education to a child who believes in himself or herself, then even with the bleakest beginning in life, that child can make it ... education is the key to breaking [the] cycle of poverty and failure.”*

**– Colin Powell, former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff**

not attend elementary school. In Sub-Saharan Africa, slightly more than half of all children are enrolled in primary school. In Asia, only about 68 percent of children attend primary school.

Compare those figures with the fact that 98 percent of children in industrialized nations attend primary school. One must ask, Why are so many children in poor countries not receiving a proper education?

There are several reasons. In some cases, schools may be located too far from home, or school schedules conflict with household duties (especially for young women). In other cases, school fees and the costs of schoolbooks, uniforms, and supplies are often beyond parents' means.<sup>33,34</sup>

Also, a significant gender gap exists in schooling. Worldwide, girls are less likely to receive formal educa-

tion than boys. Poor parents often believe that educating their sons is a better investment than educating their daughters. Although primary school enrollment rates for boys and girls are roughly equal in Latin America, the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, in other regions girls lag far behind. In the Middle East and North Africa, for instance, only 77 percent of girls are enrolled in primary school, compared to 85 percent of boys. In South Asia, the reality is worse for both sexes: only 50 percent of girls and 65 percent of boys attend primary school.<sup>36</sup>

In many parts of the world, adolescent women must end their schooling because they either get married and begin having children, or they need to work to increase family income. The result is not surprising: In some developing countries, fewer than five percent of adult women can read and write.<sup>33</sup>



In the United States, few would deny the importance of educating America's youth. But U.S. schools often fall far short of students' needs. In rural and urban areas in particular, buildings are dilapidated, school systems cannot afford books or other supplies, technology is outdated, and classrooms are overcrowded. Many of America's children who need education the most aren't getting the skills to compete in our increasingly competitive

economy. Nearly 12 percent of U.S. teens drop out of high school, and drop-out rates for minority teens are much higher. In 1998, the drop-out rate for African-

### **Case Study: Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh, fertility rates have fallen significantly, down from an average of 6.1 children born to every woman in 1980 to 3.4 children per woman in 1996, and continue to decline. The government is expanding efforts to increase access to reproductive health care and improve women's and girls' status and the opportunities available to them. Specifically, a new government policy is increasing girls' ability to stay in school through the secondary (high school) level. As

part of the policy, tuition and book stipends are provided to girls in rural and poor urban areas. Free education through college is guaranteed to girls who are only children, and more teachers have been hired. The government is also taking steps to discourage girls from getting married before the age of 18, and has launched a public awareness campaign promoting the benefits of girls' education.

Sources: *Meeting the Cairo Challenge: Progress in Sexual and Reproductive Health*. Family Care International, New York, 1999; *World Population Prospects: The 1998 Revision*. United Nations, New York, 1998.



## OUR YOUTH

Americans was approximately 20 percent; the rate was 35 percent for Hispanics.<sup>37,38</sup> Rates in urban areas are higher still. Evidence shows that dropping out of school often leads to negative outcomes such as teen pregnancy (only one-third of teen mothers have completed high school), unemployment or low-wage work, and life-long poverty that is often passed on to the next generation.<sup>39</sup>

### The role of community in education

Good schools and caring teachers are important for the development of children and teens, but they can't do everything. Children actually spend more time out of school than they do in school. During these hours they need attention, not just from parents but from members of the community who can act as surrogate mothers and fathers. At least five million youths in the United States are unsupervised when the school day ends. Increasingly, researchers believe that this "out of school time" is critical to children's development. Most juvenile crimes are committed between 3 p.m. and 8 a.m., and children not involved in after-school activities watch an average of 40 hours of television a week — more time than they spend in school.<sup>34</sup>

Adolescents who participate in after-school or weekend activities are more likely to perform well in school and build strong social skills. Also, kids who have positive

### Case Study: Bridgeport, Conn.

In Bridgeport, poverty and teen pregnancy are common and high school drop out rates are high, especially among African-American and Latino youth. The city's kids have few outlets for recreation or creativity, leading Save the Children to launch the Bridgeport Leadership Collaborative in alliance with the police department and AmeriCorps. The Collaborative offers Bridgeport children and teenagers a range of activities and supporting interventions during out of school time. These include tutoring, mentoring programs for adolescent girls and boys, arts programs, and counseling for young people and their families.

Source: *The State of the World's Mothers*. Save the Children, Westport, CT, 1999

### Investing in Education

Additional annual expense needed

Sub-Saharan Africa	\$1.9 billion
South Asia	\$1.6 billion
Middle East and North Africa	\$1.6 billion
East Asia and the Pacific	\$0.7 billion
Latin America and the Caribbean	\$1.1 billion

#### \$7 billion

Additional spending needed

Just \$7 billion more each year for the next decade — less than the amount Europeans spend on ice cream and people in the United States spend on cosmetics — is needed to achieve universal primary enrollment by the year 2010.

European annual ice cream expenditure: \$11 billion

Current annual education expenditure: \$80 billion

Source: *State of the World's Children 1999*. UNICEF, New York, 1999.

relationships with caring adults — parents, teachers, mentors, tutors, coaches and others — are much less likely to skip school than other children. They are also less likely to use drugs.<sup>34</sup>

Again, the Cairo Program provides a roadmap: Investments in education and youth development have immediate payoffs. Kids become smarter and gain self-esteem. As a result, they increase their likelihood of having good jobs, better health, and getting out of or avoiding poverty, illiteracy, violence, drugs, and teen pregnancy. Societies receive big payoffs, too, because when children stay healthy, choose smaller families, and contribute to sustainable economic development, they pass these benefits on to future generations.

Effective solutions to improving formal education, closing gender gaps, and providing quality learning experiences outside of school have been tested and proven. But in many poor countries, governments cannot afford to make these investments, or they have failed to make education a priority. Elsewhere, such as in India, rapid population growth means that schools cannot keep up with demands for education.<sup>33</sup> In the United States, a lack of political will means that not all of our kids are getting the education and after-school experiences they need and deserve. Communities and nations need to take the steps to improve these situations; the resources are there, if we choose to use them (*see "Investing in Education" box*).



# TAKING ACTION



## Education and Involvement

Below are actions you can take to promote access to education for all young people and to invest in their future potential in the United States and abroad. Also refer to the Resources section in the back of this guide for more specific information on putting the following suggestions into practice.

### At the individual level:

- Volunteer to tutor at a local high school.
- Consider becoming a mentor to young people in your community.
- Run for the school board, or find out how your business can help out your local school.

### At the community level:

- Work with others in your community to bring education on population and sustainability into local classrooms. Contact the SEP for its curriculum materials, *Community Sustainability: A Mini-Curriculum*, which you can share with teachers and administrators.
- Get involved in efforts to provide constructive after-school activities for local kids. Izaak Walton League chapters have a long tradition of providing environmental education and outdoor experiences to students. Contact a chapter near you to find out how you can contribute.
- Bring together community leaders and map out a bold vision for youth education, such as ending school dropouts or providing after-school opportunities for every child who wants them.

### At the policy level:

- Support U.S. government efforts to help developing countries expand access to education through foreign assistance and technical support. Let your representatives know why you support expanded education programs.
- Let policy-makers know you care about education in the United States and want schools that meet kids' needs for knowledge, skills, and self-confidence.





## SECTION III OUR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

### Our Economic Opportunities: Development with Equal Access for Women

At the heart of the population challenge, and the Cairo Program, are women — specifically, increasing women's ability to manage and make choices about their lives. Within this challenge lie two great opportunities. The first is to tap into women's hopes to earn income to improve their families' well being, and to expand their power to make personal, household, and community decisions. The second is to ensure that laws, policies, and practices treat men and women equally. This means paying women the same wage for the same work, and providing women with opportunities to get good, secure jobs. It also means making sure women have equal opportunities to get credit and purchase property.

#### Breaking the cycle of poverty and high fertility

Promoting economic opportunities and equality brings women into the mainstream of national and community life. This has direct benefits for women, who have increased freedom to make decisions in their lives. But the benefits also extend to everyone, because they help to create stable and sustainable populations. Increased economic opportunity and equality can free women, whether in the United States or abroad, from the cycle of bearing too many children too early in life. This cycle results in poor health for women and their children, high rates of child mortality, limited decision-making power, and poverty across generations.

Poverty is both a cause and an effect of high birth rates. Economists have found links between high fertility,



ty, wages that stay low, and poverty crossing generations. Rapid population growth often slows economic growth, particularly in poor countries. This further challenges governments' abilities to provide basic services and end the cycle of high fertility and poverty.<sup>40</sup>

Women, as the Cairo Program states, are key to ending this cycle. Studies in developing countries show that when women have the chance to earn income or start businesses, they have a better chance to move themselves and their families out of poverty. Women who have economic opportunities are more likely to have smaller families, along with healthier children who stay in school longer. In India, for example, states that are actively increasing educational and economic opportu-

*"Countries should act to empower women by ... adopting appropriate measures to improve women's ability to earn income beyond traditional occupations, achieve economic self-reliance, and ensure women's equal access to the labor market ... The improvement of [women's] political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself ... and is essential for the achievement of sustainable development."*

— Cairo Program of Action, Chapter 4, Paragraphs 1 and 4

#### Izaak Walton League conservation policy:

*"Provide all segments of the population with opportunities to achieve lives of quality and dignity."*

## DEVELOPMENT WITH EQUAL ACCESS FOR WOMEN

nities for young women have lower fertility rates than Indian states where such investments have not been made.<sup>41</sup>

Another benefit of women's increased economic activities is that, more than men, women tend to invest their earnings in children and families. Women's income pays for school fees, clothes, food, and health care.<sup>42</sup> In Nordic European countries, for instance, there is a strong link between high rates of female employment and low child poverty rates.<sup>43</sup>

### Tapping women's economic potential

More than one billion people in the world — one-sixth of the global population — live on \$1 a day or less. Two-thirds of them are women, and rates of female poverty are increasing. The number of rural women living in absolute poverty has gone up 50 percent over the past 20 years.<sup>42</sup> In the United States, it is estimated that at least 13 million adult women are poor.<sup>44</sup> Poor women want to help themselves. Across the world, millions — perhaps billions — of women want to earn an income, but lack the means to do so. They do not have access to the credit, technology, or training to launch or expand businesses. Laws, policies, and social attitudes often contribute to women's inequality.<sup>42</sup>

Many women drop out of school, have children at an early age, or don't receive the opportunity to develop the skills they need to find and retain good jobs. The effects of dropping out of school are stark. More than 10 percent of American women age 25 and older who have not completed high school are poor, compared to

.....  
*“... it is also right to expect that advancing gender equity ... may be one of the best ways of saving the environment, working against global warming, and countering the dangers of overcrowding and other adversities associated with population pressure. The voice of women is critically important for the world's future — not just for women's future.”*

– **Amartya Sen, 1999 Nobel Laureate in economics**

### Case Study: Lebanon

In Lebanon, the microcredit organization Al Majmoua is providing small loans and savings accounts to 3,500 poor women. More than \$4 million has been lent to date to fund retail businesses, expansion of agricultural enterprises, or to market handicrafts. Loans start at \$250, and the repayment rate is 99 percent. Most of Al Majmoua's women borrowers are between 30 and 39, and 75 percent are mothers, with an average of three or four children. Nearly a quarter are illiterate and just over one-third have secondary school education; many never attended school at all. Most of Al Majmoua's clients had been refused loans elsewhere, or were too afraid to even ask. Now, profits from their businesses allow them to pay for schooling and health care for daughters and sons, as well as to create new jobs for unemployed workers. Al Majmoua was launched from a Save the Children pilot project.

Source: *The State of the World's Mothers*. Save the Children, Westport, CT, 1999.





## OUR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

three percent of women with at least two years of college education and one percent of women with college degrees.<sup>45</sup>

There are, of course, choices and investments we can make to expand women's economic opportunities and promote equity. In developing countries, these investments would include expanded access to schooling and literacy courses, job training, the chance to acquire assets such as land, and loans for business development. Countries would also need to change laws and policies that prevent women and men from receiving equal treatment in legal systems, workplaces and households.

### Case Study: United States

In the United States, microfinance programs are thriving. Accion, a nonprofit organization that makes small loans in developing countries, also has the largest microlending network in the United States. Over 3,200 low-income business owners, more than



half of them women, have received \$19 million in loans through five Accion branches in New Mexico, Texas, Chicago, New York City, and San Diego. Most Accion clients have few assets, but microcredit is helping change this. Impact studies show that after two loans, Accion's clients' average monthly business profits rose by 47 percent, business equity increased by 42 percent, and take-home income was up by 38 percent. Additional benefits were also documented, including increased self-confidence, a greater sense of belonging to and participating in the community, and expanded ability to provide for their families.

Source: Accion USA ([www.accion.org/programs/main.asp](http://www.accion.org/programs/main.asp))



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As one step toward meeting these goals, a 10-year, international effort has been launched to provide \$100 million in small business loans (microcredit) to poor people around the world, mostly women. Women have already proven themselves good financial investments. Globally, their loan repayment rates are above 95 percent.<sup>42</sup>

In the United States, women also need expanded access to credit, job training, skills development, and in some cases, literacy classes. This is especially true for poor American women and those making the transition from welfare to work. Although American women have made great strides toward legal equality since the 1970s, they aren't always equal in practice. Take equal pay for equal work, for instance. Women in the United States still earn about 77 cents for every \$1 earned by men.<sup>46</sup> As the Cairo Program makes clear, unleashing women's economic potential and promoting their equality and empowerment in the home, workplace, and in national laws and policies offers them greater control over their lives. Women throughout the world deserve nothing less than equal rights. And, the benefits of equal rights are undeniable: improved child health and education; smaller, healthier families; reductions in individual and family poverty; and the full involvement of women in meeting the challenge of achieving sustainability.



## Economic Opportunity and Women's Equality

Below are actions you can take to promote access to advance women's economic opportunities and ensure their equality in the United States and abroad. Also refer to the Resources section in the back of this guide for more specific information on putting the following suggestions into practice.

### At the individual level:

- Purchase gifts for friends and family from organizations that assist women producers (see the Resources section under Economic Development and Equity).
- Make sure your own workplace has policies guaranteeing equal pay for equal work.
- Invite women to speak to students about their own experiences with economic opportunity, or organize a career day at a school that features the experiences of working women.

### At the community level:

- Consider opportunities to prepare young people, especially girls, to enter the workplace. Sponsor an internship, create links with businesses, or work as a volunteer with programs such as Junior Achievement.
- Work with others in your community to expand economic opportunities for poor women through mentoring or training, or support microcredit and job training efforts.
- Make equal pay for equal work policies part of a community sustainability indicators project. Contact the SEP for a workshop guide to developing indicators, *Monitoring Community Sustainability*, part of a series designed for community use.

### At the policy level:

- Organize a letter-writing, e-mail, or postcard campaign to tell Congressional representatives that you support U.S. foreign assistance programs that help women in poor countries become economically active or gain access to microcredit.
- Support efforts to create a regulatory environment in the United States that supports women entrepreneurs through laws, policies, infrastructure, and programs that expand women's access to credit.
- Actively support policies and programs that help poor American women obtain the skills, education, training, and other resources they need to join and stay in the workforce.







## A FINAL NOTE

This *Action Guide* has sought to show the importance of the Cairo Program of Action and its potential for stabilizing human population and bringing about sustainable ways of living and doing business. The Cairo Program offers solutions to rapid population growth, high consumption, and environmental decline. These solutions are both visionary and practical. By meeting people's basic needs for health care, education, economic opportunity, and equality — and by reducing consumption — we can avoid the pitfalls of unsustainable growth. Not only do we improve the quality of life for billions of people throughout the world, we also help to reduce the intense strains that growing populations exert on the Earth's resources.

But the stakes are high. The Cairo Program has been around for six years, and while much progress has been made in meeting its goals, there is still much more to do. The timing is critical — we cannot afford to wait. We need to act in our own homes and communities. We need to educate local and national policy-makers on what the Cairo Program says and urge them to act, especially by making funds available to implement the actions the Cairo Program outlines.

Each year, the U.S. budget includes funding for international population assistance programs, along with funds to get boys and girls in poor countries into school and provide economic opportunities to women. These funds help millions of people gain access to basic services — many for the first time in their lives. We need to support full funding for these budget items, and to make our support known to Congress. We also need to support funding for access to health care, good quality education, and economic opportunities here in the United States, too.

As a first action in supporting the Cairo Program, please sign and mail the postcards included with this guide. Then review the Take Action and Resources sections, which should help you get started or take your already-enthusiastic activism to a new level.

In 50 years' time, the individual and collective actions we take now will have a huge impact. We all hold in our hands, minds, and hearts the ability to determine whether human population in 2050 will reach 11 billion — almost twice what it is now — stabilize at 7.3 billion, or settle somewhere in between.

The League believes that we *can* have a world where all people, those at home and those far away, have things all of us want: health care, education, and the chance to provide for ourselves and our families. A world where consumption does not outstrip the earth's ability to provide for our needs and wants. A world in which both the planet and the human species can thrive.

Surely the rest of creation is holding its breath to see what we do.



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# RESOURCES FOR ACTION

This section contains resources that can help readers to extend the "take action" sections of this Guide, and launch their own outreach, education or advocacy efforts on population and sustainability issues and in support of the Cairo Program of Action. For additional materials, or for advice on other channels of action, please contact the Izaak Walton League's Sustainability Education Project at the address on the inside front cover. Also visit our Website for more information and action-oriented updates, publications and curricula.

## Population and Consumption Issues

Brown, L., et al., *Beyond Malthus: Nineteen Dimensions of the Population Challenge*. W.W. Norton & Co., New York, N.Y., 1999. Summary online at: [www.worldwatch.org](http://www.worldwatch.org), (202) 452-1999

*Nature's Place: Human Population and the Future of Biological Diversity*. **Population Action International**. Washington, D.C., 2000. Summary online at: [www.populationaction.org](http://www.populationaction.org), (202) 557-3400

Hren, Ben. *Conservation in a World of Six Billion: A Grassroots Action Guide*. **Izaak Walton League of America**, Gaithersburg, MD. September 1999. Summary online at: <http://www.iwla.org/sep/resources/6bill.html>, (301) 548-0150

*From Commitment to Action: Meeting the Challenge of the ICPD*. **U.S. Agency for International Development, Center for Population, Health and Nutrition**. Washington, D.C., 1999.

Curricular materials for teachers on population and related issues, along with other resources for educators, are available online at: <http://www.popinfo.org/downloads/index.htm>, **Facing the Future**: (360) 468-3888

The **Center for a New American Dream** has a set of fact sheets on population and consumption in the United States and abroad: [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org), 301-891-ENUF (3683)

**Planetwire**, an online newsroom with regular feature stories, facts and analysis of issues related to population, international family planning assistance, reproductive health and the environment: [www.planetwire.org/index.php](http://www.planetwire.org/index.php), (202) 326-8700

**Population and Environment Linkage Service**, contains bulletin boards, links, information and published resources on key issues: [www.cnle.org/pop/pophome.htm](http://www.cnle.org/pop/pophome.htm), (202) 530-5810

**Population, Health, Environment Bulletin Board**, a place to post notices, share ideas, ask questions and get answers on population and related issues: [dacnet4.rice.edu/dac4-cgi-bin/Ultimate.cgi?action=intro](http://dacnet4.rice.edu/dac4-cgi-bin/Ultimate.cgi?action=intro), (202) 530-5810

**The United Nations Population Fund**, offers a host of information on population issues, women's reproductive health, youth and other topics on their Website: [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org), (212) 297-5000

**U.S. Census Bureau**, a national agency that compiles facts and statistics about the U.S. population: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**The WorldWatch Institute**, produces regular reports on environmental issues, consumption and sustainability: [www.worldwatch.org](http://www.worldwatch.org), (202) 452-1999

**Zero Population Growth**, produces fact sheets, publications and curricular materials on population and consumption issues: [www.zpg.org](http://www.zpg.org), (800) POP-1956



# RESOURCES FOR ACTION

## Reproductive Health

*Meeting the Cairo Challenge: Progress in Sexual and Reproductive Health*, and a shorter version, *Meeting the Cairo Challenge: A Summary Report*. **Family Care International**. New York, N.Y., 1999. Online at: [www.familycareintl.org](http://www.familycareintl.org)

*The Safe Motherhood Action Agenda: Priorities for the Next Decade*. **Family Care International**. New York, N.Y., 1998. Online at: [www.safemotherhood.org](http://www.safemotherhood.org)

*Saving Women's Lives, Protecting Women's Health: U.S. Global Leadership in Family Planning*. **U.S. State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development**. Washington, D.C., 2000.

*State of World Population* (updated annually). **United Nations Population Fund**. New York, N.Y. Online at: [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org), (212) 297-5000

**Alan Guttmacher Institute**, produces regular reports and fact sheets on reproductive health and related issues in the United States and abroad: [www.agi-usa.org](http://www.agi-usa.org), (202) 296-4012

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America**, offers fact sheets, publications and a range of materials designed to inform young people about reproductive health issues and care: [www.ppfa.org](http://www.ppfa.org), (800) 230-PLAN

**Reproductive Health Gateway**, run by the **Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs**, a database of resources on reproductive health for health professionals and others: [www.rhgateway.org](http://www.rhgateway.org); <http://www.jhucp.org/>; <http://www.jhucp.org/comet/rhgate.stm>; (410) 659.6300

The **U.S. Agency for International Development's Center for Population, Health and Nutrition**, produces fact sheets (one regularly updated series is "Pop Briefs") and publications regarding women's reproductive health status and the positive impacts of U.S. investments in reproductive health and family planning in poor countries. Also a good source for details of U.S. overseas funding and budget allocations: [www.info.usaid.gov](http://www.info.usaid.gov), (202) 712-4810

## Education and Youth Development

*State of the World's Children* (issued each year; 1999 edition focuses on education). **UNICEF**. New York, N.Y. Online at: [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), (212) 326-7000

*Progress of Nations* (issued each year; focuses on children's well being). **UNICEF**. New York, N.Y. Online at: [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), (212) 326-7000

*Digest of Education Statistics* (updated regularly). **National Center for Education Statistics**. Washington, D.C. Online at: [nces.ed.gov](http://nces.ed.gov), (202) 502-7300

*America's Children 2000*. **Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics**. Washington, D.C., 2000. Online at: [nces.ed.gov](http://nces.ed.gov), (202) 502-7300

**Children's Defense Fund**, a national organization working to improve conditions for American children and teenagers, especially those living in poverty: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org), (202) 628-8787

**Kids Count**, a national effort of the **Annie E. Casey Foundation** that tracks the status of children in the United States state-by-state; updated annually: <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/>, (410) 547-6600

# RESOURCES FOR ACTION

## Economic Opportunity and Women's Equality

*Economics and Rapid Change: the Influence of Population Growth.* **Population Action International.** Washington, D.C., 1997.

*Child Poverty in Rich Nations.* **UNICEF**, Innocenti Research Center. Florence, Italy, 2000. Online at: [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org), (212) 326-7000

*The State of the World's Mothers.* **Save the Children.** Westport, Conn., 1999. Online at: <http://www.savethechildren.org/>, (800) 728-3843

**Accion USA**, a micro-credit organization working in the developing world and now in the United States to provide poor people (mostly women) with small loans to start or expand businesses: [www.action.org](http://www.action.org), (202) 543-9340

**Serrv International**, a non-profit alternative trade organization that assists people in developing regions of the world by marketing hand crafts in a just and direct manner. Eighty percent of the artisans are women. Serrv sells through churches, retail stores and a catalogue. (800) 423-0071, [www.serrv.org](http://www.serrv.org), (800) 422-5915

## Legislation and Funding for Population / The Cairo Program

*Paying Their Fair Share? Donor Countries and International Population Assistance.* **Population Action International.** Washington, D.C., 1999.

"*International Population Assistance News*," produced twice a year by **Population Action International**, featuring analysis of news about and trends in international population policy. Online at: [www.populationaction.org/programs/wpulhome.htm](http://www.populationaction.org/programs/wpulhome.htm), (202) 557-3400

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America's** weekly report on legislation (state-level, national and international): [www.plannedparenthood.org/rchoices/lac/whatsup.asp](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/rchoices/lac/whatsup.asp), (212) 261-4300

**Population Action International's** legislative action center: [congress.nw.dc.us/pai](http://congress.nw.dc.us/pai), 202 557-3400

Reports and bi-weekly news on U.S. foreign assistance and foreign policy produced by **InterAction** (a consortium of international development organizations): [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org), (202) 667-8227

**Sustainability Education Project, Izaak Walton League of America:** For the most recent Action Alerts from the project visit <http://www.iwla.org/sep/> or call (301) 548-0150

## International Development Issues

"*UN Wire*," offers daily news produced by the **United Nations Foundation** with stories on population, environment, health, children and other international issues: [www.unfoundation.org](http://www.unfoundation.org), (202) 887-9040

*Human Development Report*, published annually by the **UN Development Program**, contains statistics and analysis of major trends in human well being for all countries. Online at: [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org), (212) 906-5315

**U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)**, a federal agency that promotes development in poor countries, including implementation of the Cairo Program: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov), (202) 712-4810

**The World Bank**, provides regular reports on international issues, including health, economic development and education: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org), (202) 477-1234



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## TAKING ACTION

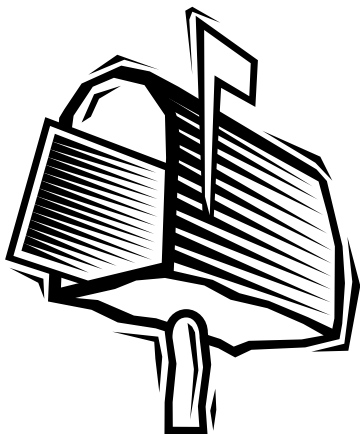
### Here is a first step for you to take.

Our leaders in Congress need to know that there is a strong constituency for efforts to balance human numbers and consumption levels with natural resources. You can send these postcards to get that message across.

Directions:

- 1.) Cut out the card.
- 2.) Put on your name and address and a stamp (if you want to save us the cost of postage).
- 3.) Send it to us.

We will deliver them to your representatives. If you prefer to write your own message, you can send it to us via email or the regular mail to the address on the back cover.



Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

As a conservationist, I recognize the urgent need to balance human population with the Earth's resource base. One of the best plans for doing this is the Program of Action that 179 governments, including the United States, agreed to in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994 at the International Conference on Population and Development. The Cairo Program shows that by meeting basic human needs for health care, education, and economic opportunity, population growth will slow to more sustainable levels. I ask your support for all measures designed to advance the Cairo Program, both overseas and in the United States. Specifically, I urge you to support:

Full funding for international population assistance in the Foreign Operations budget and resources to significantly expand education and economic opportunities to people in developing countries, especially women; and Policies and investments in the United States to improve access to health care and quality schooling, and to provide the skills, training, and credit American women need to move themselves and their families out of poverty.

Sincerely,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

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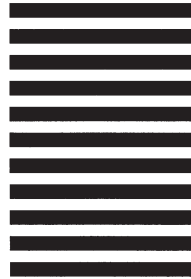
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Address: \_\_\_\_\_



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# THE SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION PROJECT

**Join with the League as we use our community base and grassroots experience to embrace the common-sense notion that economic prosperity, ecological health, and equitable sharing among all people not only go together, they depend on one another.**

The Sustainability Education Project (SEP) is a conservation initiative of the Izaak Walton League of America. It works to bring the impacts of human population growth, economic development, and natural resource consumption into balance with the limits of nature for the benefit of current and future generations.

We do this through:

1. Education and outreach to change attitudes, raise awareness, and promote networking;
2. Advocating League population and consumption policy positions at the national level and encouraging members and supporters to contact elected officials and the media;
3. Directly supporting community efforts with information, technical assistance, and onsite visits; and
4. Building the capacity of League leaders to support local sustainability activities.

SEP provides reports, curricula, and fact sheets to help communities plan their own sustainability efforts. These are available on the League Web site ([www.iwla.org](http://www.iwla.org)) or by contacting SEP by phone, fax, or mail (see contact information below).

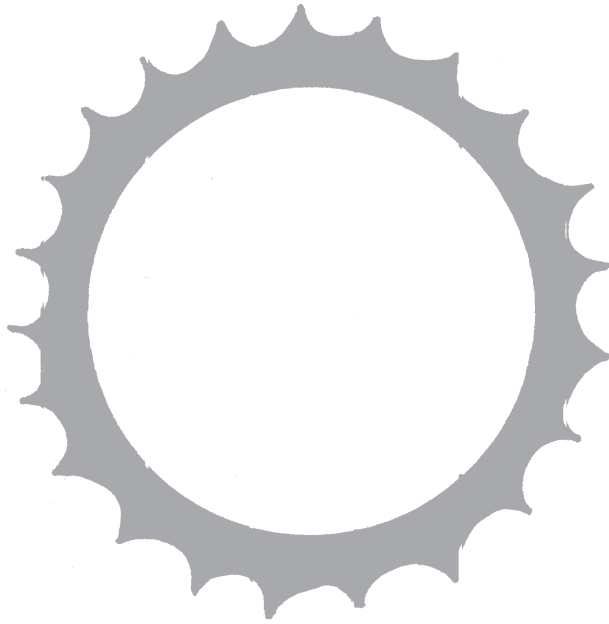
Members of the SEP **Sustainability Network** receive the Project's free newsletter, "Sustainability Communicator," along with action alerts on how individuals can help to bring about better public policies in support of sustainability in the United States and abroad.

For more information about SEP, to join our grassroots network, or to request additional copies of this *Action Guide*, contact:

## **Izaak Walton League of America**

707 Conservation Lane  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2983  
Phone: (301) 548-0150; Fax: (301) 548-0149  
E-mail: [sustain@iwla.org](mailto:sustain@iwla.org)  
Web site: [www.iwla.org](http://www.iwla.org)





## **Izaak Walton League of America**

707 Conservation Lane  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2983  
Phone: (301) 548-0150; Fax: (301) 548-0149  
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