Age Structure and Development through a Policy Lens

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Presentation Outline

1. Demography within National Policy
   • Very Young Age Structure Examples:
     - Rwanda
     - Uganda
   • Aging Age Structure Example: South Korea

2. Integrating Demography into the Policy Dialogue
   • The Challenge of Projections
   • The Challenge of Recommendations
Age Structure Variation

Very Young Age Structure
75% under age 30
5.5 children per woman

Transitional Age Structure
52% under age 30
2.04 children per woman

Mature Age Structure
41% under age 30
2.07 children per woman
Demography within National Policy

• National responses to domestic demographic trends are varied (UN Population Division survey 2009)
• Government views of their own population growth:
  - 22% too low
  - 42% satisfactory
  - 35% too high
• Developed regions: 79% say aging is a major concern
• Developing regions: 90% say HIV/AIDS, 50% say high population growth are major concerns
Policy Issues in Very Young Age Structure Countries: Rwanda

- Population declined by 1.5m between 1990-1995
- Contraceptive use fell to 4% in 2000
- Total fertility rate six children per woman
- Population almost doubled between 1995-2010
- Then...dramatic change
- Fertility declined 25% in 5 years
  (6.1 in 2005 → 4.6 in 2010)
- Effective contraceptive use more than quadrupled
  (10% in 2005 → 45% in 2010)
Rwanda continued

• Policies to expand access to health services + political will made the difference
• Community-based health insurance and donor support
• RAPID model: Smaller family size increases health and education opportunities
• President Kagame: “Priority number one”

![Graph showing trends in average number of children per woman, total fertility rate, and contraceptive prevalence rate over time.](Source: MEASURE DHS)
Policy Issues in Very Young Age Structure Countries: Uganda

- Youngest age structure in the world
- 76% under age 30
- 15-24 age group doubled 1990-2010
- At current fertility, population will triple by 2040 (~100 million)
- Fertility stagnant: Less than 10% decline since late 1980s

Source: UN Population Division

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Uganda continued

- More than ¾ population lives on <$2/day
- If fertility remains above 6, Uganda will need to generate 1.5 million new jobs annually by 2030
- In 2009, only 100k new job seekers found employment
- President Museveni (2008): “To some extent, even underdevelopment is caused by underpopulation”
- Human capital: the missing link in the demographic dividend
Policy Issues in Mature Age Structure Countries: South Korea

- Fertility fell from 5.6 in early 1960s to replacement in 20 yrs
- Below-replacement since 1985; now 1.15
- At current fertility, population would enter decline in early 2020s
- Projected decline from 48 to 43m by 2050

Source: UN Population Division
South Korea continued

- Factors in fertility decline
  - Later age at marriage (mean age 29 for women)
  - More women remaining unmarried
  - Inflexible gender roles
  - Cost of education

- Policy response
  - Pronatalist stance implemented in 2005
  - Various incentives (tax breaks, child care, etc.)
  - Goal of increasing fertility to 1.6
  - TFR has continued declining
Integrating Demography into the Policy Dialogue

Issues for researchers and practitioners
- The challenge of projections
- The challenge of recommendations
Population Projection Challenges

- No crystal ball: Assumptions often left out of the discussion
- World is getting demographically diverse: Convergence is unlikely
- Population trends driven largely by fertility, which does not operate in a vacuum
- To achieve population projections (or alter their trajectory), we must have effective policies backed up with funding
Policy Recommendation Challenges

- First and foremost, must respect human rights
- Demography’s impact on political factors is complex – but that doesn’t mean it should be ignored
- Research points in useful directions, but much remains unknown (impact of aging, future demographic dividends, stalled high fertility)
- Policymakers typically focus on immediate-term
- Easy to deflect “sensitive” issues