

## **Attachment I**

### **Extended Abstract**

#### *Introduction*

Population and family planning have rarely been linked with climate compatible development in climate policy discussions. Research has demonstrated, however, that helping women in all countries achieve their own aspirations for planning pregnancies and family size would put the world on a path to slower population growth. This would ultimately lead to substantial reductions in future carbon dioxide emissions, because even though carbon emissions tend to be low in countries where population growth rates are high, current evidence shows that per capita emissions rise as nations develop. Additional research suggests that reducing unintended pregnancies would also have multiple health, education, and economic benefits for women and their households—improvements that could potentially reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts.

#### *Approach*

The Population Reference Bureau and Worldwatch Institute assembled a group of experts from the climate change, family planning, and development communities to review evidence on family planning and climate links, develop guiding principles for those advocating for these linked issues, and identify specific action opportunities for advancing policy dialogue and policy action to include family planning among climate change policies and strategies. The expert working group recommendations provide a path forward for groups that want to link these issues and ensure that universal access to family planning is part of efforts to achieve climate compatible development.

The climate compatible development benefits of reducing unintended pregnancies either for emission reductions or for adaptation to climate change, have largely been ignored in climate policy dialogue in part because the complexity of the connection between population and climate change has too often been reduced to simplistic assertions, and also because of the sensitivity surrounding the term population, which in the past has been linked to controlling population growth in developing countries. PRB and Worldwatch assembled a diverse expert working group to overcome these challenges and recommend opportunities for linking family planning and climate change.

Working group meetings were established as a collaborative open space for facilitated dialogue, beginning with presentations of background papers, developing consensus on objectives, agreeing on the process for arriving at the policy proposal, and examining the concepts and data on unmet need and unintended pregnancy to assure that all participants understood the concepts and used a common language. The group framed FP-climate connections from a woman-centered and rights-based approach in order to avoid language related to population growth or reducing fertility that research has shown is less amenable to environmental and health audiences and developed a set of agreed upon guiding principles for the discussion.

### *Findings and Discussions*

The group reviewed and discussed working papers and research to better understand population and climate connections and identify different pathways by which strategies for meeting unmet need for FP and reducing unintended pregnancies could enter into dialogue on

climate change compatible development, assessing both mitigation and adaptation. A final consensus report on recommendations and a group statement were developed for dissemination. The group reviewed evidence on the connections between population and climate change with an emphasis on family planning as a key component of reproductive health, and based on this evidence reached a central conclusion and recommendation:

**Human population influences and is influenced by climate change and deserves consideration in climate compatible development strategies. Achieving universal access to family planning throughout the world would result in fewer unintended pregnancies, would improve the health and well-being of women and their families, and would slow population growth, all of which are beneficial to climate compatible development. We recommend that improving access to family planning be among the actions included among comprehensive and synergistic efforts to achieve development compatible with addressing climate change.**

Based on the goal of achieving universal access to family planning as part of climate compatible development, the group identified various action opportunities for advancing this connection. This report summarizes the work of the group and organizes a range of actions under four strategic approaches, which include:

- 1. Identifying and acting on policy opportunities to ensure that universal access to family planning is part of climate compatible development strategies.**
- 2. Building awareness about trends in unintended pregnancy, unmet need for family planning and their connections to climate change.**
- 3. Creating an enabling environment for connecting these issues and advancing these policy opportunities by fostering more cross-sector dialogue and action among health, climate, and development sectors.**
- 4. Increasing the pool of financing available for both climate change and family planning and creating innovative financing for family planning within climate compatible development plans.**

The expert working group recognizes that linking population, reproductive health and climate change is an unconventional and perhaps challenging concept from a policymaking perspective—and all the more so from the perspective of climate finance. We do not propose that policy and finance initiatives aimed at expanding access to family planning be removed from their longstanding base in the health and development sectors and assigned to agencies and experts directly addressing climate change. Nor do we advocate funding family planning by diverting funding streams from existing programs aimed at climate-change mitigation and adaptation to fund family planning.

Rather we urge an openness within the emerging the concept of climate-compatible development to the synergistic benefits that would result from approaching universal access to family planning, in particular, as one social and development milestone that would facilitate such development. The group believes that cross-sectoral alliances, initiatives and efforts to highlight potential synergies and integrate them in development plans—up to and including in climate finance programs as these evolve—could reap enormous benefits, especially over time, both for individuals and societies grappling with mitigation and impacts of climate change.