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How will demographics affect Kenya's ability to reach Millennium Development Goal One.

The importance of a country's demographics was a key issue highlighted by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan when he asserted that 'the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, cannot be achieved if questions of population and reproductive health are not squarely addressed.'[1] Remarkably, the MDGs themselves fail to adequately address issues of demographics.[2] With the date for the attainment of the MDGs less than five years away, the reality that the majority of countries will not reach their targets is becoming evident. Although the reasons for such failures will be wide and varied, issues of demographics will undoubtedly play a role.

Like many developing countries, Kenya's total fertility rate (TFR)[3] has decreased over recent decades, from six in 1990 to 4.9 in 2009.[4] In spite of a decrease in TFR, population momentum, whereby a high TFR in the previous generation has resulted in a large portion of people of childbearing age, means that Kenya's population is still growing at a rate of 2.6 percent per year.[5] While such a decrease in TFR is a trend that has been experienced across much of the developing world in recent decades, Kenya has witnessed a surprising simultaneous decrease in life expectancy at birth. This decrease is demonstrated by a fall in life expectancy from 60 in 1990 to 55 in 2009.[6] Kenya is therefore home to a very young population, with a median age of 18.9 and 42.2 percent of the population aged below 14.[7] Both the rate of population growth and young age structure poses serious concerns for the country's ability to

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[1] UNFPA, 'Master Plans For Development', http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/sitemap/icpd/MDGs/MDGs-ICPD (accessed on 12 August 2011).

[2] In 2005, Target 5B: Universal access to reproductive health by 2015 was added to the MDGs. Although aiming to improve contraceptive prevalence and reduce births among adolescents, no mention of population growth was included.

[3] According to the World Bank, the total fertility rate represents the number of children that would be born to a woman if she were to live to the end of her childbearing years and bear children in accordance with current age-specific fertility rates.

[4] World Bank, 'World Development Indicators', http://www.google.com/publicdata?ds=wb-wdi&met_y=sp_dyn_tfrt_in&idim=country:KEN&dl=en&hl=en&q=total+fertility+rate+kenya#ctype=l&strail=false&nselm=h&met_y=sp_dyn_tfrt_in&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=country&idim=country:KEN&ifdim=country&hl=en&dl=en (accessed on 4 July 2011), 2011.

[5] The World Bank, 'Data', http://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya (accessed on 6 August 2011), 2011.

[6] UNICEF, 'Statistics', http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/kenya_statistics.html (accessed on 2 August 2011), 2 March, 2010.

[7] Central Intelligence Agency, 'The World Factbook', https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ke.html (accessed on 25 July).

reach the MDGs.[8] To gauge just how big of a role demographics will play in the attainment of the MDGs, this paper will investigate the impact of Kenya's demographics on goal one.

TARGET 1.A. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day.

The most obvious catalysts for poverty are economic, and in the case of a heavily agriculture dependent country such as Kenya, the success or failure of crops. Although the linkage between economic growth and poverty is strong, a country's demographics also play an important role in both contributing to and alleviating poverty. According to a report entitled *The Return of the Population Growth Factor*, 'with the exception of a few oil-rich states, no country has risen from poverty while still maintaining high average fertility.'[9]

A complete statistical analysis of the impact of demographics on target 1.A is, however, hampered by a lack of reliable data surrounding poverty levels within Kenya. Such constraints have previously been highlighted in the *2005 MDG Status Report for Kenya* that concluded that 'a major problem hindering a detailed assessment of the progress of MDGs in Kenya is the paucity of relevant data.'[10] According to the World Bank there is no available data on the percentage of Kenyans living below one dollar per day.[11] Although a comprehensive data analysis may not be possible, commentary and an examination of the impact of Kenya's current and evolving demographics on target 1.A can be undertaken.

Kenya's Demographic Dilemma

In spite of a recent decline in TFR, from six in 1990 to 4.9 in 2009,[12] Kenya's population is currently growing at a rate of 2.6 percent per annum.[13] This

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[8] The term "young age structure" is currently used quite loosely. Upon analysis of the research question, however, the specific parameters, whether they be age based or demographically defined will be specified.

[9] Report of Hearings by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, 'Return of the Population Growth Factor: Its Impact upon the Millennium Development Goals', http://www.populationconnection.org/site/DocServer/Return_of_the_Population_Growth_Factor.pdf?docID=224 (accessed on 22 July 2011), p.5.

[10] Government of Kenya, 'MDGs Status Report For Kenya 2005', http://www.undg.org/archive_docs/6585-Kenya_Second_MDG_Report_-_Report.pdf (accessed on 1 July 2011), p.11.

[11] The World Bank, 'Data', http://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya (accessed on 6 August 2011), 2011.

[12] World Bank, 'World Development Indicators', http://www.google.com/publicdata?ds=wb-wdi&met_y=sp_dyn_tfrt_in&idim=country:KEN&dl=en&hl=en&q=total+fertility+rate+kenya#ctype=l&strail=false&nselm=h&met_y=sp_dyn_tfrt_in&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=country&idim=country:KEN&ifdim=country&hl=en&dl=en (accessed on 4 July 2011), 2011.

[13] The World Bank, 'Data', http://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya (accessed on 6 August 2011), 2011.

remarkable growth rate, in spite of a decline in fertility, is common among many African countries. Due to an extremely high TFR in recent decades, (Kenya's TFR in 1980 was 7.5),[14] a large portion of the population is currently of childbearing age. Population momentum therefore ensures that the country's population continues to grow at a rapid pace. There is also a large discrepancy between rural and urban fertility rates in Kenya. The 2009 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), (that placed Kenya's TFR at 4.6), found that TFR in rural areas was 5.2 compared to just 2.9 in urban areas.[15] With an urbanisation rate of four percent per year, however, a significant amount of this disparity is mitigated by rural to urban migration.[16] Such migration largely consists of working age males in search of employment. Existing high unemployment levels, compounded by migration, have however resulted in increased population density within already overcrowded urban slum areas. Another concerning feature of Kenya's population is its age structure. With a broad based population pyramid, Kenya has a very young population with a median age of 18.9 together with 42.2 percent of the population being aged below 14.[17] These factors combined, have a negative impact on rates of poverty within the country.

Dependency Theory

According to Kenya's Economic Planning Secretary, Stephen Wainana, 'only with manageable population can the country's economy flourish. Small families translate to greater wealth for both family members and the nation.'[18] With the average births per woman being 4.9, not taking into account rates of unemployment (which will be discussed at a later point), Kenya's working age population is responsible for a large number of economic dependents. According to World Bank statistics, the ratio of dependents (categorised here as those aged below 15 or above 64) to those of a working age is 86 percent (due to life expectancy being just 55, the impact of elderly dependents is negligible).[19] This dependency ratio therefore impinges on household savings and diminishes the productive power of the workforce.

Demographic Dividend

Kenya's persistently high TFR has not allowed the country to capitalise on what is

[14] World Bank, 'World Development Indicators', http://www.google.com/publicdata?ds=wb-wdi&met_y=sp_dyn_tfrt_in&idim=country:KEN&dl=en&hl=en&q=total+fertility+rate+kenya#ctype=l&strail=false&nselm=h&met_y=sp_dyn_tfrt_in&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=country&idim=country:KEN&ifdim=country&hl=en&dl=en (accessed on 4 July 2011), 2011.

[15] English News, 'Poverty Headache for Kenya on Road to MDGS', http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/indepth/2011-07/19/c_13995211_2.htm (accessed on 2 August 2011), 19 July, 2011.

[16] ibid. loc. cit

[17] Central Intelligence Agency, 'The World Factbook', https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ke.html (accessed on 25 July).

[18] English News, 'Poverty Headache for Kenya on Road to MDGS', http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/indepth/2011-07/19/c_13995211_2.htm (accessed on 2 August 2011), 19 July, 2011.

[19] The World Bank, 'Data', http://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya (accessed on 6 August 2011), 2011.

commonly referred to as the "demographic dividend" or "demographic bonus" that occurs when a country transitions from a high to low TFR. The benefits of such a transition are felt at both the micro and macro levels. Following a period of extremely high fertility, a decline in the TFR will result in a higher ratio of the working to the non-working population. Within the family unit, a slowdown in TFR minimises the impact of the dependency theory as discussed above. At a national level, this transition has the ability to expand gross domestic product (GDP) and induce economic growth via an increase in the productive labour force. The subsequent increase in income tax revenue afforded to the government, thereby allows it to circumvent Gerald Meier's concerns regarding capital widening versus deepening in developing countries, as increased revenue and a lower dependency ratio allows for larger investments into areas such as health and education (both of which contribute to poverty reduction). A report entitled *The Return to the Population Growth Factor* conferred this premise:

> In developing countries where the birth rate has fallen, between 25% and 40% of economic growth is attributable to the demographic change. This dividend is split into two parts …through the benefit of improved health, as healthy people are more productive …that savings are spread less thinly, allowing for more investment in education and skills for employment.[20]

Kenya's TFR is expected to decrease from its 1990 level of six to as low as 3.3 by 2015.[21] Although immediately reducing the number of new dependents for every adult worker, the positive impact of the demographic dividend will not be achieved by 2015, as the current cohort of dependents will take in excess of four years to transition to workers. To capitalise on this dividend in the future, however, 'social development policies are needed to turn the demographic dividend into real economic gains. Failure to act and introduce appropriate policies on health, education, and job creation, will lead to unfavorable results.'[22]

Civil Conflict

Kenya's current and growing "youth bulge" (definitions of which typically range from 12 to 25 year olds), makes the country more susceptible to civil conflict. According to Henrik Urdal, for every percentage youth increases as a proportion of the wider

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[20] Report of Hearings by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, 'Return of the Population Growth Factor: Its Impact upon the Millennium Development Goals', http://www.populationconnection.org/site/DocServer/Return_of_the_Population_Growth_Factor.pdf?docID=224 (accessed on 22 July 2011), p.21.

[21] U.S. Census Bureau, 'International Data Base', http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/country.php (accessed on 12 July 2011), 27 June, 2011.

[22] Hassan M. Yousif, 'How Demography Matters for Measuring Development Progress in Africa?', in *Le Journal statistique africain,* No. 8, May. 2009, p.23.

community, the chance of civil conflict increases by in excess of four percent.[23] In the event of a civil conflict, a country's economy suffers significantly. According to Paul Collier, during civil conflict, a country's economy declines by 2.3 percent per year (a calculation that does not take into account the economic impact of loss of life, the cost of internally displaced people, or the eventual cost of rebuilding infrastructure.)[24] As Kenya progresses towards 2015, due to a persistently high TFR coupled with reductions in infant and under-five mortality rates, the prevalence of youth will continue to increase, thereby increasing the likelihood of economically damaging conflict.

Rapid population growth, coupled with a large portion of people below the working age, precludes economic growth and domestic savings at both the micro and macro level. When compounded by the country's increased susceptibility to civil conflict (seen most recently in the 2008 post-electoral violence) it becomes evident that demographics play a large role in economic growth and therefore efforts to reduce poverty. Although a statistical analysis is unavailable, making it impossible to make a prediction as to just how big an impact Kenya's demographics will have on the country's ability to reach target 1.A, it is evident that it will be damaging.

TARGET 1.B. Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.

Kenya's unemployment rate is currently estimated at 40 percent.[25] Such a high level of unemployment can be attributed to a multitude of factors that include poor economic growth and a lack of foreign investment. The fact that unemployment rates are disproportionately high among Kenya's youth, indicates that the apparent "youth bulge" is placing an unmanageable burden on the labour market.

The negative impact of a large portion of youth on unemployment rates has previously been recorded. In the demographic shifts that occurred following World War II, it was documented in both the US and Europe that 'wages and employment for youth fell as the relative size of the youth cohort grew.'[26] A recent World Bank cross-country study within Africa reinforced this view, as it found that for every one percent increase in the portion of youth in the wider society, youth unemployment

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[23] Jeffrey D. Sachs, *Common Wealth: Economies for a Crowded Planet,* New York, Penguin Group, 2008, p.199.

[24] Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It,* New York, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp.27-28.

[25] Dorah Nesoba, 'Youth Unemployment Crisis Continues, Millions of College Grads Flood Unemployment Lines', http://www.globalpressinstitute.org/print/430 (accessed on 5 July 2011), 13 October, 2010.

[26] Marito Garcia and Jean Fares, 'Youth in Africa's Labor Market', http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1208379365576/DID_Youth_African_Labor_Market.pdf (accessed on 12 July 2011), 2008, p.5.

grew by half a percent.[27] In a country such as Kenya, where population momentum, coupled with the projected demographic transition from a high to low TFR set to occur much later than the majority of African countries, the number of youth, both in terms of raw numbers and as a percentage of society, will continue to rise over the coming decades. Although economists Marito Garcia and Jean Fares advocated that 'a large youth cohort also presents an opportunity',[28] without the requisite economic growth, unemployment becomes a significant concern. The current situation faced by Kenya reinforces the view of Jeffrey Sachs who stated 'the population bulge is occurring in the part of the world that at this point is least able to generate jobs.'[29]

Youth Unemployment in Kenya

Before the signing of the MDGs, there was evidence that Kenya's labour market was unable to absorb new prospective entrants. Kenya's labour force (which stood at 11.5 million in 1996) had grown at an average annual rate of 4.1 percent between 1986 and 1996. During this period, 492,000 new jobs needed to be created to absorb such growth. Instead, job creation increased at an average annual rate below 2.5 percent, which resulted in over two million unemployed.[30]

The Global Policy Network reiterated such problems in its 2003 report entitled *Highlights of Current Labor Market Conditions in Kenya.* The report stressed that the Kenyan employment market, already floundering with 23 percent of Kenyans unemployed at the time, was unable to absorb the large number of job seekers.[31] Although undoubtedly hampered by the slow down in GDP growth rates, (having peaked at 6.5 percent in the decade following independence Kenya recorded a growth of just 1.1 percent in 2002),[32] the Kenyan economy has remained unable to cater for its large youth population. Even though economic decline has a negative impact on unemployment rates, a clear pattern of disparity between general unemployment, and youth specific unemployment, has emerged. In 1989, for example, the unemployment rate for 15 to 24 year olds was 11.8 percent, compared to 4.9 percent for 25 to 34 year olds. In spite of an overall increase in unemployment witnessed over the next decade, the disparity remained, with 1998-9 statistics demonstrating that youth unemployment reached 25.7 percent compared to 13.1 percent among 25 to 34 year olds.[33]

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[27] ibid., pp.xxviii – xxix.
[28] ibid., p.5
[29] Jeffrey D. Sachs, *Common Wealth: Economies for a Crowded Planet,* 2008, p.18.
[30] Noah Chanyisa Chune, 'Highlights of Current Labor Market Conditions in Kenya', in *Global Policy Network,* 28 October, 2003, p.4.
[31] ibid. loc. cit
[32] ibid., p.2
[33] Joy Kiiru et al., 'Education, Training and Youth Unemployment in Kenya', http://depot.gdnet.org/newkb/submissions/UNDP%20Project_26.pdf (accessed on 12 July 2011), October, 2009, p.5.

Today, although comprising 30 percent of Kenya's population, youth unemployment accounts for 78 percent of total unemployment.[34] It is currently estimated that just 125,000 youths gain formal employment every year.[35] Existing unemployment rates continue to be compounded as 'the 750,000 students who graduate from educational institutions here each year will continue to flood the unemployment lines.'[36] The combination of existing youth unemployment together with the annual influx of expectant graduates has resulted in Kenya having close to 2.5 million unemployed youths.[37]

Government Intervention

Initiated via schemes such as *Kazi kwa Vijana* (Work For the Youths), the Kenyan government has endeavored to address such problems. However, after a number of failed attempts to initiate the programme, and the fact that work offered is usually on a short-term basis, the issue of youth unemployment has not subsided. Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki even conceded that 'the government cannot do the work alone, we need help from the private sector.'[38]

The Role of Demographics in Youth Unemployment

Between 1990 (the date from which progress towards the MDGs is measured) and 2015, Kenya will see an increase in both the number of youths and the portion of youths compared to the wider society. During this period, however, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Kenya's TFR is expected to decrease from 5.6 to 3.3.[39] Population momentum will however result in a continued increase in Kenya's population. When combined with expected improvements in infant and under-five mortality rates, more people will progress beyond childhood. Unless this demographic transition is accompanied by sustained economic growth, Garcia and Fares' belief in the potential value of a large youth cohort will not transpire and youth unemployment will almost certainly rise by 2015. Although Kenya is slowly moving away from what Meier referred to as a "bottom heavy" age structure, without increased employment opportunities, the barriers to economic success caused by a high dependency ratio will remain. Dependency will not, however, be in its current form of age dependency, but rather there will be increased dependency within families on the employed, by the unemployed.

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[34] ibid., p.3

[35] Jeff Otieno, 'Unemployment the Biggest Challenge to Kenya's Growth – President Kibaki', http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/-/2558/929968/-/pege00z/-/index.html (accessed on August 12 2011), 1 June, 2010.

[36] Dorah Nesoba, 'Youth Unemployment Crisis Continues, Millions of College Grads Flood Unemployment Lines', http://www.globalpressinstitute.org/print/430 (accessed on 5 July 2011), 13 October, 2010.

[37] Jeff Otieno, 'Unemployment the Biggest Challenge to Kenya's Growth – President Kibaki', http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/-/2558/929968/-/pege00z/-/index.html (accessed on August 12 2011), 1 June, 2010.

[38] ibid. loc. cit

[39] ibid. loc. cit

Looking Beyond the MDGs

Looking beyond 2015, as part of Kenya's demographic transition, whereby the TFR is expected to be as low as 2.2 by 2025,[40] there exists a window of opportunity to capitalise on the country's large workforce. This demographic dividend will see an increase in Kenya's productive capacity via an increase in both the number of workers and the ratio of the working population to the non-working population.[41] This opportunity to increase Kenya's level of GDP via increased availability of labour supply has the potential to boost Kenya's economy and subsequently create exponential employment opportunities. It is also a transition that is partly accredited with the success of the "East-Asian Tigers."[42] Without increased government intervention or sustained economic growth, however, the window of opportunity will be lost and 'failure to tap this potential will convert them into challenges of growing poverty, unemployment, and instability.'[43]

The ability to attain target 1.B is severely constrained by Kenya's youth bulge. At the current rate, not only will Kenya fail to make any progress toward target 1B of MDG one, but unemployment numbers will continue to increase. Looking beyond, 2015, however, there is hope that, with the right economic policies, the benefits of the demographic dividend could be achieved and Kenya's large working-age population could emulate Jimenez and Murthi's belief that a large youth cohort can be beneficial to economic prosperity.

TARGET 1.C. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Although the twentieth century witnessed the largest ever increase in world population, food supply was able to cater for such rapid growth. While Thomas Malthus' vision of widespread food shortages has not yet come to fruition, as 'the only region in the world freely declaring incapacity to feed itself',[44] issues of food security within Africa remain pertinent.

It is important to note that hunger is caused by a myriad of factors. This section will, however, focus purely on the role played by demographics. Similarly to the analysis

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[40] ibid. loc. cit

[41] Hassan M. Yousif, 'How Demography Matters for Measuring Development Progress in Africa?,' p.23.

[42] Marito Garcia and Jean Fares, 'Youth in Africa's Labor Market', http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1208379365576/DID_Youth_African_Labor_Market.pdf (accessed on 12 July 2011), 2008, p.5.

[43] Hassan M. Yousif, 'How Demography Matters for Measuring Development Progress in Africa?,' p.23.

[44] Allam Ahmed and Emmanuel Cleeve, 'Tracking the Millennium Development Goals in sub-Saharan Africa', in *International Journal of Social Economics,* Vol. 31, No. 1 / 2, 2004, p.16.

of target 1.A, a comprehensive statistical review is hindered due to the lack of reliable data that both defines and measures levels of hunger in Kenya. Although a numerical analysis will not be possible, an investigation into the impact of Kenya's current and evolving demographics on target 1.C can be achieved.

According to the limited data available, it appears that (prior to the current food crisis in the Horn of Africa), Kenya had been making progress towards reducing hunger. This progress was demonstrated by a reduction in the portion of children under-five deemed underweight, from 32.5 percent to 20 percent between 2002 and 2003.[45] The percentage of children under-five deemed to be "wasted" (a term used to describe someone who is underweight for their height) also decreased marginally from 6.6 percent to six percent between 2000 and 2003.[46] In spite of this progress, in 2010 it was estimated that half of all Kenyans lacked sufficient food.[47] This is not to say that they were suffering from hunger, but that they were not consuming sufficient nutrients for day-to-day life.

The Malthusian Trap

Kenyan analyst John Omiti, (Principal Policy Analyst at the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis), stated that 'population growth is higher than our ability to produce food. We need to address the demographic challenge to balance supply and demand.'[48] Kenya's agricultural production is currently increasing between one and two percent per year, however, this is below the country's current population growth rate of 2.6 percent.[49] Although Kenya's growth rate is expected to reduce (the U.S. Census Bureau estimated a decline to 1.9 percent in 2015 and as low as 1.2 percent by 2025),[50] in the short-term, Kenya's rate of population growth will impact negatively on food supply. Kenya's ability to feed itself is already being undermined by the almost six million Kenyans who receive some type of food aid (a number that increases exponentially during times of drought).[51] Due to trade, aid

[45] Government of Kenya, 'MDGs Status Report For Kenya 2005', http://www.undg.org/archive_docs/6585-Kenya_Second_MDG_Report_-_Report.pdf (accessed on 1 July 2011), p.12.

[46]ibid. loc. cit

[47] Government of Kenya and UNDP, 'Draft Progress in Attainment of MDGs and Way Forward Towards Achieving MDGs By 2015 in Kenya', http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Kenya/KenyaDraftMDGReport2010.pdf (accessed on 1 July 2011), September, 2010, p.30.

[48] IRIN, 'Kenya: Experts Voice Food Security Concerns', http://irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88196 (accessed on 22 August 2011), 22 February, 2010.

[49] The World Bank, 'Data', http://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya (accessed on 6 August 2011), 2011.

[50] U.S. Census Bureau, 'International Data Base', http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/country.php (accessed on 12 July 2011), 27 June, 2011.

[51] IRIN, 'Kenya: Experts Voice Food Security Concerns', http://irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88196 (accessed on 22 August 2011), 22 February, 2010.

and ever increasing technological innovations, it is unlikely that the Malthusian trap will be felt on a large scale. Currently, and until the ramifications of population momentum subside, Kenya's rate of population growth will however, continue to impact negatively on food security and levels of hunger.

Civil Conflict

The occurrence of conflict acts as a catalyst to increased rates of hunger. Kenya's demographic structure, (as previously discussed with regards to target 1.A), makes the country more susceptible to civil conflict due to its high proportion of youth. The most recent civil conflict (the 2008 post-electoral violence) had a substantial negative impact on food production and rates of hunger. Prior to the conflict, per capita food consumption had increased by 10 percent between 1999 and 2006.[52] Following the violence, however, 'the performance of the sector did not do well in 2008 and 2009 recording negative 4.3% and negative 2.7% respectively putting brakes on efforts to achieve food sufficiency.'[53] James Nyoro from the Rockefeller Foundation, however, undermined this correlation when he stated that 'food insecurity has been expanding even without considering the post-election violence. The food deficit is increasing at 3 percent on average per year, at the level of population growth'.[54] It is therefore plausible to suggest that both Kenya's rate of population growth and increased susceptibility to civil conflict impact negatively on food security and provide another dimension to Collier's assessment of the cost of civil conflict.

Poverty

With poverty inextricably linked to hunger, a persistently high TFR acts as a major barrier to economic prosperity (as previously discussed with reference to target 1.A) and therefore to food security. Ibrahim Maalim from the Ministry of State for Special Programmes, highlighted this linkage when he asserted that 'the issue is not only production; our major problem is also poverty. Even when we have food we have Kenyans who cannot afford it.'[55] This idea is further reinforced by the fact that in developing countries the poor spend between 50 and 70 percent of their incomes on food.[56] The inability to produce sufficient food is therefore an occurrence that impinges most on the poorest members of society.

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[52] Government of Kenya and UNDP, 'Draft Progress in Attainment of MDGs and Way Forward Towards Achieving MDGs By 2015 in Kenya', http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Kenya/KenyaDraftMDGReport2010.pdf (accessed on 1 July 2011), September, 2010, p.33.

[53] ibid. loc. cit

[54] IRIN, 'Kenya: Experts Voice Food Security Concerns', http://irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88196 (accessed on 22 August 2011), 22 February, 2010.

[55] ibid. loc. cit

[56] Population Connection Fact Sheet, 'Population Growth and Food Insecurity', http://www.populationconnection.org/site/DocServer/2011_Food.pdf?docID=2501 (accessed on 22 August 2011), July, 2011, p.2.

In addition to the cost of food, if populations grow at a rate faster than food supply (as is currently occurring in Kenya), existing supplies must be distributed among a larger pool of people. The ramifications of such further redistribution are felt at both the macro and micro level, as food must again be dispersed within family units. As the poor already subsist on the smallest of rations, further redistribution of food can result in hunger.[57] The linkages between poverty and hunger are therefore unquestionable, and although the likelihood of the Malthusian trap occurring in Kenya is negligible, both increases in food prices and further re-distribution of food caused by heightened demand, contribute to rates of hunger.

Sub-Division of Land

With regards to subsistence farmers, increased population density (caused by decades of rapid population growth), compounded by the current effect of population momentum and a persistently high TFR among Kenya's rural families (TFR in rural areas is currently at 5.2),[58] results in the recurrent subdivision of family plots. Such sub-division places increased pressure on the success of such crops. Although rural to urban migration (as previously discussed with regards to target 1.A) diminishes demand for land, the ensuing drain of largely working-age men has the ability to deplete such rural areas of vital human capital.[59] Although the ramifications of population momentum will persist well beyond 2015, a decrease in fertility within families would immediately diminish what Meier referred to as constraints to household savings, and therefore provide families with a valuable safety net against crop failure and rising food prices.[60]

Government Initiatives

The Kenyan government currently spends between US40 and 65 million dollars per year on famine relief.[61] In addition to this, *Njaa Marufuku Kenya* (Kick Hunger out of Kenya) was initiated in 2005. Through this initiative, grants totaling 315.5 million Kenyan shillings have been distributed to 2593 community groups. On top of this financial assistance, *Njaa Marufuku Kenya* connects farmers with community group

[57] Thomas R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population,* Philip Appleman (eds)., New York, Norton, 1976.

[58] English News, 'Poverty Headache for Kenya on Road to MDGS', http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/indepth/2011-07/19/c_13995211_2.htm (accessed on 2 August 2011), 19 July, 2011.

[59] Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, 'V. Population Aspects in the Reduction of Hunger', http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/PopAspectsMDG/04_FAO.pdf (accessed on 12 July 2011), p.V-4.

[60] Gerald M. Meier, *Leading Issues in Economic Development; studies in international poverty,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1970, p.591.

[61] Government of Kenya, 'MDGs Status Report For Kenya 2005', http://www.undg.org/archive_docs/6585-Kenya_Second_MDG_Report_-_Report.pdf (accessed on 1 July 2011), p.12.

facilitators who assist them in improving their farming techniques.[62] Although providing short-term subsidies, such support may not be sustainable as:

> [T]he economic and environmental costs of augmenting per capita food production may well prove too great for countries whose populations grow faster than their economies, resulting in greater poverty and fewer resources to fight it.[63]

While Malthus' grand claim that unchecked population growth will result in widespread food shortages remains unfounded, population momentum coupled with the country's persistently high TFR (particularly in rural areas) provides a significant obstacle to attaining food security and therefore reaching target 1.C.

A review of progress towards MDG one indicates that the demographic features of rapid population growth and a young age structure will impact negatively on both the attainment of the goal and the government's ability to continue to subsidise the country's progress. Although in the long-term Kenya's demographic transition could prove to be beneficial to the country's development, between now and the date for the attainment of the MDGs, demographics will continue to plague progress towards goal one.

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