

Call for Extended Abstracts
Submission Deadline: July 26, 2010

The Fertility and Empowerment Network (F&E Network)* is soliciting papers exploring the impact of fertility declines on women's empowerment and gender relations in countries that have experienced significant fertility declines within the past three decades. Selected authors will be asked to participate in two meetings in 2011, where they will have the opportunity to receive feedback from F&E Network members and members of its senior advisory committee. A subset of the completed papers will be included in an edited volume on the topic.

Background

Research from more industrialized nations suggests that fertility declines and access to contraceptive technology have functioned as important levers for change in women's lives and in gender relations. Given that widespread fertility declines have occurred in many poorer countries in recent decades—often within a single generation—it is important to understand the consequences of such declines for women, men, and society under varying contextual circumstances. Currently many nations are simultaneously experiencing shifting age structures, higher aspirations, increasing female labor force participation, and rapid changes in the global economy in addition to lower fertility levels; however, there is a dearth of research exploring how these forces of change are connected and might interact to alter gender inequities at the societal level. Further research on the impact of fertility declines and the mediating effects of contextual factors will shed light on some of the most pressing issues currently challenging low and middle income societies—many of which lie precisely at the intersection of population, gender, and development. Moreover, from a policy and programmatic perspective, this work may provide insights into how to maximize positive consequences for countries still in the early stages of fertility transition.

For further background, please see the attached summary of the conceptual/theoretical grounding of this research: "Remobilizing the Gender and Fertility Connection: The Case for Examining the Impact of Fertility Control and Fertility Declines on Gender Equality."

The Volume

The overarching objectives of the volume are twofold:

- 1) To investigate the influences of fertility decline and access to contraceptive technology on women's empowerment and gender inequities at the societal level, and
- 2) Where empirical evidence exists, to explore the mechanisms through which change occurs as well as the economic, legal, political, and/or socio-cultural contexts best suited to foster such changes.

We welcome contributions exploring the interrelationships between these factors using empirical analysis in countries that have experienced significant fertility transition within the past three decades. Papers must examine these connections over time rather than cross-sectionally and should incorporate information on the macro-historical context (e.g., political, cultural, economic, etc.) into their analysis. We also wish to encourage submissions from a range of disciplinary perspectives and geographic regions, and the use of a variety of methods and data sources.

We prefer that studies examine gender-related outcomes at the meso and macro levels, for example the structure of the labor market; institutional shifts in marriage formation; legal and/or de facto protections or entitlements; norms about women's sexuality; political representation; access to education; etc. Authors who opt to focus on individual-level impacts could consider comparative outcomes such as: gains in decision-making, control over assets, freedom of mobility, self-confidence, negotiating ability, sexual independence, economic contributions, etc.—either behaviorally or normatively.

Relevant research topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Shifts in fertility levels (among population subgroups, regions, countries) and their relationship to outcomes of interest
- Differential types and/or prevalence of fertility control (e.g., woman-controlled versus provider controlled contraception, access to abortion, etc.) and relationship to outcomes of interest
- More complex analyses of the relationships listed above incorporating the influence of contextual factors, for example policy/programmatic environment, labor market conditions, etc.
- Analysis of shifts in social/economic value of children over time and relationship to outcomes of interest, especially marriage patterns, family structures, sexual control and negotiation.

Guidelines for Abstract Submission

Deadline: All abstracts must be submitted by: **July 26, 2010**

Submissions should be sent to FandEnetwork@icrw.org. Abstracts must be in English. Acceptable submission formats are Microsoft Word (.doc), Portable Document Format (.pdf), and Rich Text Format (.rtf). Hard copy submissions cannot be accepted.

Abstracts should be 3-5 pages (including references and appendices) and include:

- Paper title
- Names, institutional affiliations, and full contact details of the author(s)
- Description of the primary hypotheses/research questions to be investigated
- Description of the setting, data sources, and methodological approach
- Outline of the paper
- If available, preliminary findings of work in progress.

Please note that sufficient data exploration must have been completed prior to abstract submission to confirm the feasibility of the proposed study.

Notification: Submissions will be reviewed by the F&E Network, and authors will be notified via email in early September 2010. If selected for inclusion in the edited volume, authors will be expected to complete their final papers by September 2011. Please note that all final papers will undergo a rigorous peer review process, and that publication of the edited volume is not expected until early 2012.

Interim Workshop and Final Meeting: Selected authors will be invited to participate in a workshop in January 2011 (final date and venue to be determined). All workshop participants will be asked to present progress to date and will receive feedback from core F&E Network members, members of its senior advisory committee, and other selected participants. The selected participants will also be asked to present their papers at a final meeting in Fall 2011. The F&E Network will cover travel, lodging, and other costs related to participation in both meetings.

* **Fertility and Empowerment Network** The Fertility and Empowerment Network is coordinated by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) in Washington, DC and is comprised of selected researchers with expertise and a strong commitment to gender and population issues. Currently this network is engaged in empirical work that investigates whether—and under what contextual circumstances—declining fertility rates and increased access to contraceptive technology have fostered

women's empowerment and transformations in gender relations in countries that have recently completed (or are in the final stages of) their demographic transitions. Network members are undertaking empirical studies using innovative methods and are analyzing the connection between fertility and gender dynamics from a historical perspective. Their work will culminate in a published volume of studies and create a forward-looking research agenda on contraception, fertility, empowerment and gender relations.

Current network members and their institutional affiliations include:

- International Center for Research on Women
 - Dr. Anju Malhotra, Vice President, Research, Innovation, & Impact
 - Dr. Susan Lee-Rife, Social Demographer
 - Sophie Namy, Program Associate, Population and Development
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
 - Dr. Michelle Hindin, Associate Professor, Department of Population, Family, & Reproductive Health
- Emory University Rollins School of Public Health
 - Dr. Kathryn Yount, Associate Professor, Hubert Department of Global Health and Department of Sociology
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
 - Dr. Keera Allendorf, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology