



# WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT

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## World Population Day

On July 11, 1987, the world population reached a figure of five billion. From this day onwards, the [United Nations](#) Population Fund (UNFPA) resolved to observe this day of each year as the World Population Day **with a view to sensitizing nations about this emerging problem.** The very first theme for the World Population Day focused on "young people" since people under 25 years constituted more than half of the world's population. **On July 11, 1987, the world population touched five billion. The [United Nations](#) Population Fund (UNFPA) resolved to observe this day every year as the World Population Day, to sensitise nations against this ticking time bomb. This year, the theme for World Population Day focuses on "young people". People under 25 constitute more than half of the world population. A major fall-out of the population explosion is poverty. While the available resources remain the same, the number ...**

After growing very slowly for most of the human history, the world's population more than doubled in the last half century. Moreover, population is still increasing by about 78 million people a year, despite the trend worldwide towards smaller families. Total population size is likely to grow at least for the next 40 years and it is expected to increase by another 2.6 billion in the next 47 years. Almost all of this growth is occurring in the developing regions. Most industrialized countries are growing either very slowly or not at all while in a few countries, population size is declining.

### Population milestones

There is currently no estimation on the exact day the world's population surpassed both one and two billion marks. The days on which three and four billion marks were reached were not officially celebrated. According to the International Database of the U.S. Bureau of census, these figures were reached in around July 1959, and April 1974. The United Nations declared and celebrated the "Day of 5 billion" which fell on

July 11<sup>th</sup> in 1987. This was considered as the birth of the world population day. The world reached the 6 billion mark on October 12, 1999. However, the international programs division of the U.S. Census bureau has currently estimated that the world reached a population of 6 billion on April 21, 1999, several months earlier than the official UN day of population. The day of reaching the seven billion figure has been estimated to be in February 2012 by the Census Bureau.

Projections show that the world population could reach the figure of 11 billion by 2150. Although this may sound like an alarming situation, the demographic trends show an overall decrease in the growth rate of the world's population. Demographers are of the opinion that the global population will stabilize around the mark of 11 billion people. Global population growth rates have dropped from 2.1% in the decade spanning from 1960 to 1970 to a projection of 1.3% from 2005 to 2010. Most parts of the world have gone through the "demographic transition. Though it is quite clear that the world population will not continue to increase exponentially causing a falling of inhabitants off the planet, the question remains as to how the earth will sustain five billion more people in the next 150 years.

More than ever, in the world, the largest group of young women enters their childbearing years, requiring an expansion of family planning services to meet their needs. It enables more couples to complete their desired family size. In the long term, these smaller families will contribute to individual and family well-being, a slowdown in population growth rates, and a sustainable economic development.

In the final analysis, the number of people on earth is not the real challenge. The real challenge is to improve the quality of life of every inhabitant. Against this background, the world population day of 2009 was held recently on July 11 and this year's theme was "Fight poverty;

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Educate girls “.

### World population day 2009

The population explosion that the world has seen in the past fifty years lies in the heart of the most of major problems. These problems faced by the humanity are environmental, political, and social. They need prompt interventions. This year the world population day stressed the importance of investing in the health and education of women as the global financial and economic crisis threatens to push 200 million people back into poverty. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has called to make health and education of women a political and development priority.

The theme of this year's World Population Day, "Responding to the economic crisis: why investing in women is a smart choice," provides a chance to focus on the importance of investing in women and girls. The global economic crisis threatens to reverse the hard won-gains in education and health. As women represent the majority of the world's poor, they will face increased health risks especially if they are pregnant.

In her World Population Day message, Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, the Executive Director of UNFPA, said that today, complications of pregnancy and childbirth are leading killers of women in the developing world. "Maternal mortality represents the largest health inequity in the world. This health gap will only deepen unless we increase social investments, maintain health gains and expand efforts to save more women's lives," she said.

"Investing in reproductive health, in particular, will help women and girls avoid unwanted or early pregnancy, unsafe abortions as well as pregnancy related disabilities. This would mean that women who stay healthier are more productive and have more opportunities for education, training and employment, which in turn benefit entire families, communities and nations," the Executive Director said.

Women and girls were the majority of the world's poor and in developing countries, women's health has critical economic importance. Women comprise more than half of the agricultural labour force. They grow 80 per cent of staple crops in Africa while in South-east Asia, 90 per cent of rice growers are women.

Investing in reproductive health is especially cost-effective, noted Ms. Obaid, adding, as an example, "an investment in contraceptive services can be recouped four times over—and sometimes dramatically more over the long term—by reducing the need for public spending on health, education and other social services."

In a separate statement, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on decision-makers to "protect women's ability to earn income, keep their daughters in school, and obtain reproductive health information and services, including voluntary family planning.

"Together," added Mr. Ban, "let us advance the rights of women and girls, and empower them as highly productive members of society capable of contributing to economic recovery and growth. There can be no better investment on this day or any other."

Since 1990, governments and their national partners have been marking World Population Day with a variety of activities and events focusing on the importance of population to overall development strategies. This year's 20th anniversary of the Day coincides with the 40th anniversary of UNFPA and the

15th anniversary of the historic International Conference on Population and Development.

### Impact of education on women

For girls and women living in poverty, education is not only the key to a brighter future. It is also a key to survival. Using education as a primary strategy, we can aim to harness the potential of girls and women to learn, lead and act on their vision of change for themselves, their families, and their communities.

It is also important to consider the situation of women around the world. One in three women and girls in the developing world live on less than \$2 a day. It was found that women in Sub-Saharan Africa are more than 1.5 times as likely as men to contract HIV. Millions of women in America have difficulty in understanding practical health information. More than 10,000 girls a day will get married before they turn 15. More than 60% of the 110 million children out of school are girls.

It is worth appreciating that educated girls and women are less vulnerable to HIV infection, human trafficking and other forms of exploitations. They are more likely to marry later, raise fewer children who are more likely to go to school, and make important contributions to family income.

Education of girls reduces poverty and improves the quality of life for all citizens. Educating girls and women translates to higher economic opportunities and productivity, reduced child mortality, improved family nutrition, health, and increased prevention of HIV and AIDS. Rates of HIV infection are growing at an alarming rate for girls and women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Combining education, community awareness, and collaboration between women's groups, health workers, and policy makers, programs raise the voices of girls and women who mobilize communities for change.

Health and literacy are two integrated aspects. Through proper education girls and women learn about their health, the dangers of early marriage, and how to protect themselves from exploitation. As women learn practical skills, they increase their confidence and strengthen their support for each other, allowing them to more fully participate in decisions that affect their health and the well-being of their families and communities.

Education can increase girls' and women's life options through programs that combine practical literacy skills, health, access to savings and credit with community awareness. Post-secondary education opens the door to the future for women and their families. Programs equip girls and women with skills and confidence and promote girls' and women's leadership in families, schools and communities.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, has made remarkable progress in achieving universal access to primary education and health-care. With a literacy rate of 89.2 percent, life expectancy at 77 years for women and maternal mortality ratio of 44.3 per 100,000 live births, Sri Lanka shows that with the right investments women's well-being can be improved even prior to achieving high levels of economic development. Invariably, the Sri Lankan experience will be a shining light of example for many a developing nation.

This article was compiled by Dr. Upekha Senevirathana

Table 1: Vaccine-preventable Diseases & AFP

04<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009 (28<sup>th</sup> Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2009	Number of cases during same week in 2008	Total number of cases to date in 2009	Total number of cases to date in 2008	Difference between the number of cases to date in 2009 & 2008
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
Acute Flaccid Paralysis	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	03	43	57	-24.6%
Diphtheria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	-
Measles	00	00	00	00	01	00	00	00	00	01	02	65	62	+04.6%
Tetanus	00	00	00	01 MN=1	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	15	19	-21.0%
Whooping Cough	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	30	24	+25.0%
Tuberculosis	34	01	11	01	24	19	06	00	12	108	187	5386	4730	+13.8%

Table 2: Newly Introduced Notifiable Disease

04<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009 (28<sup>th</sup> Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2009	Number of cases during same week in 2008	Total number of cases to date in 2009	Total number of cases to date in 2008	Difference between the number of cases to date in 2009 & 2008
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
Chickenpox	20	02	15	117	01	03	04	05	12	179	77	10751	3113	+245.3%
Meningitis	01 CB=1	00	01 MT=1	04 VA=4	02 KM=2	08 KR=3 PU=5	00	00	05 KG=3 RP=2	21	15	570	803	-33.7%
Mumps	03	00	02	00	03	02	08	02	05	25	51	1042	1453	-29.0%
Leishmaniasis	00	00	04 HB=2 MT=2	00	00	00	01 AP=1	00	00	05	Not available*	461	Not available*	-

Key to Table 1 & 2

Provinces: W: Western, C: Central, S: Southern, N: North, E: East, NC: North Central, NW: North Western, U: Uva, Sab: Sabaragamuwa.  
 DPDHS Divisions: CB: Colombo, GM: Gampaha, KL: Kalutara, KD: Kandy, ML: Matale, NE: Nuwara Eliya, GL: Galle, HB: Hambantota, MT: Matara, JF: Jaffna, KN: Killinochchi, MN: Mannar, VA: Vavuniya, MU: Mullaitivu, BT: Batticaloa, AM: Ampara, TR: Trincomalee, KM: Kalmunai, KR: Kurunegala, PU: Puttalam, AP: Anuradhapura, PO: Polonnaruwa, BD: Badulla, MO: Moneragala, RP: Ratnapura, KG: Kegalle.

Data Sources:

Weekly Return of Communicable Diseases: Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Chickenpox, Meningitis, Mumps.

Special Surveillance: Acute Flaccid Paralysis.

Leishmaniasis is notifiable only after the General Circular No: 02/102/2008 issued on 23 September 2008.

Table 4: Surveillance of Communicable diseases among IDP's

04<sup>th</sup> June – 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009 (28<sup>th</sup> Week)

Area	Disease	Dysentery	Enteric fever	Viral Hepatitis	Chicken Pox	Watery Diarrhoea
Vavunia		05	01	13	65	00
Chendikulam		86	23	192	95	718
Total		91	24	205	160	718

Table 4: Selected notifiable diseases reported by Medical Officers of Health

04<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009 (28<sup>th</sup> Week)

DPDHS Division	Dengue Fever / DHF*		Dysentery		Encephalitis		Enteric Fever		Food Poisoning		Leptospirosis		Typhus Fever		Viral Hepatitis		Human Rabies		Returns Received Timely**
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
Colombo	161	2414	1	113	0	7	7	109	0	38	8	324	0	4	3	56	0	4	100
Gampaha	134	2191	1	98	0	17	1	30	0	10	1	169	0	7	2	49	0	2	73
Kalutara	37	795	13	196	0	9	0	43	16	42	4	140	0	1	10	30	0	2	83
Kandy	158	2582	3	188	0	5	1	18	0	54	3	141	4	108	10	46	0	0	83
Matale	123	919	2	66	0	2	0	23	0	6	7	249	0	3	3	14	0	2	92
Nuwara Eliya	6	139	9	293	0	1	1	134	0	770	1	26	0	44	3	43	0	0	85
Galle	20	274	6	125	0	10	0	2	0	20	0	94	0	4	1	10	0	3	84
Hambantota	30	599	3	56	0	6	0	5	0	8	2	51	2	46	4	21	0	0	91
Matara	65	719	4	178	0	4	0	4	0	15	1	95	1	75	2	20	0	1	100
Jaffna	0	9	0	73	0	3	0	167	0	28	0	0	0	122	1	112	0	2	25
Kilinochchi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mannar	0	4	1	51	0	1	2	81	0	4	0	0	0	0	6	41	0	0	25
Vavuniya	0	11	34	1299	0	3	5	150	0	2	0	2	0	1	139	2990	0	0	75
Mullaitivu	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Batticaloa	9	400	0	175	0	12	1	8	0	41	0	8	0	2	5	16	0	2	64
Ampara	9	175	0	30	0	0	0	8	0	5	0	8	0	0	2	11	0	0	71
Trincomalee	10	295	1	62	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	16	0	14	11	28	0	1	90
Kurunegala	149	1573	3	107	0	8	0	40	3	8	2	63	1	54	8	57	0	4	89
Puttalam	46	373	2	86	0	7	0	56	2	2	9	57	0	26	5	14	0	1	100
Anuradhapur	19	408	0	72	0	4	0	4	0	3	0	74	0	26	6	45	0	1	74
Polonnaruwa	10	103	2	24	0	2	1	18	0	6	1	51	0	0	6	33	0	0	71
Badulla	7	181	1	161	0	2	2	29	0	18	1	54	4	67	3	209	0	1	87
Monaragala	3	89	2	38	0	0	1	16	1	8	0	12	2	46	7	46	0	0	91
Ratnapura	104	1166	3	336	0	16	0	37	0	5	6	124	1	23	9	74	0	1	78
Kegalle	135	2482	9	100	0	6	2	25	0	6	5	112	1	22	10	126	0	1	73
Kalmunai	3	129	3	70	0	1	2	10	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	11	0	0	69
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	<b>1238</b>	<b>18030</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>3999</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1022</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1872</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>4102</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>79</b>

Source: Weekly Returns of Communicable Diseases WRCD).

\*Dengue Fever / DHF refers to Dengue Fever / Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever.

\*\*Timely refers to returns received on or before 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2009 Total number of reporting units =311. Number of reporting units data provided for the current week: 244

A = Cases reported during the current week. B = Cumulative cases for the year.

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