



state of world population 2009

Facing a changing world: women, population and climate

18 November 2009

Dear Editor:

The State of World Population 2009 breaks new ground by shifting the debate on climate change from abstract and technical discussions about nations' carbon emissions to the realities of how human beings—from individuals to the world's population as a whole—both influence and are affected by the warming of the earth's atmosphere.

Climate change not only endangers lives and undermines livelihoods, but it threatens to exacerbate the gaps between rich and poor and amplify the inequities between women and men.

Women—particularly those in poor countries—are affected differently than men. Women are among the most vulnerable to climate change, partly because in many countries they make up the larger share of the agricultural work force and partly because they tend not to have access to as many income-earning opportunities as men.

The report explores the critical connections among population dynamics, reproductive health, women's lives and climate change as they relate to greenhouse-gas emissions and societies' resilience against the impacts of climate change. The report describes what can be done to slow down—and possibly roll back—climate change and what must be done to help the poor adapt to the climate change that is already under way.

The report is being released in the lead-up to the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, where delegates from around the world are expected to endorse a new treaty to limit the warming of the earth's atmosphere. A treaty that helps people adapt to climate change and harnesses women's and men's power to reverse the warming of the earth's atmosphere would launch a genuinely effective long-term global strategy to deal with climate change.

This report aims to remind the international community that climate change is more than an issue of energy efficiency or industrial carbon emissions; it is also about people and where and how they live, what they consume and the rights and opportunities available to them.

I hope you will find the enclosed report and youth supplement to be useful sources for stories about climate change and people. All materials in this folder are under embargo until 12:00 GMT, 18 November 2009.

Sincerely,

Safiye Çağar

Director

Information and External Relations Division
UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund