

# Communicating about Family Planning and Climate Change

Cost-Effectiveness of Family Planning  
in Reducing Future CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions

**Thomas Wire**

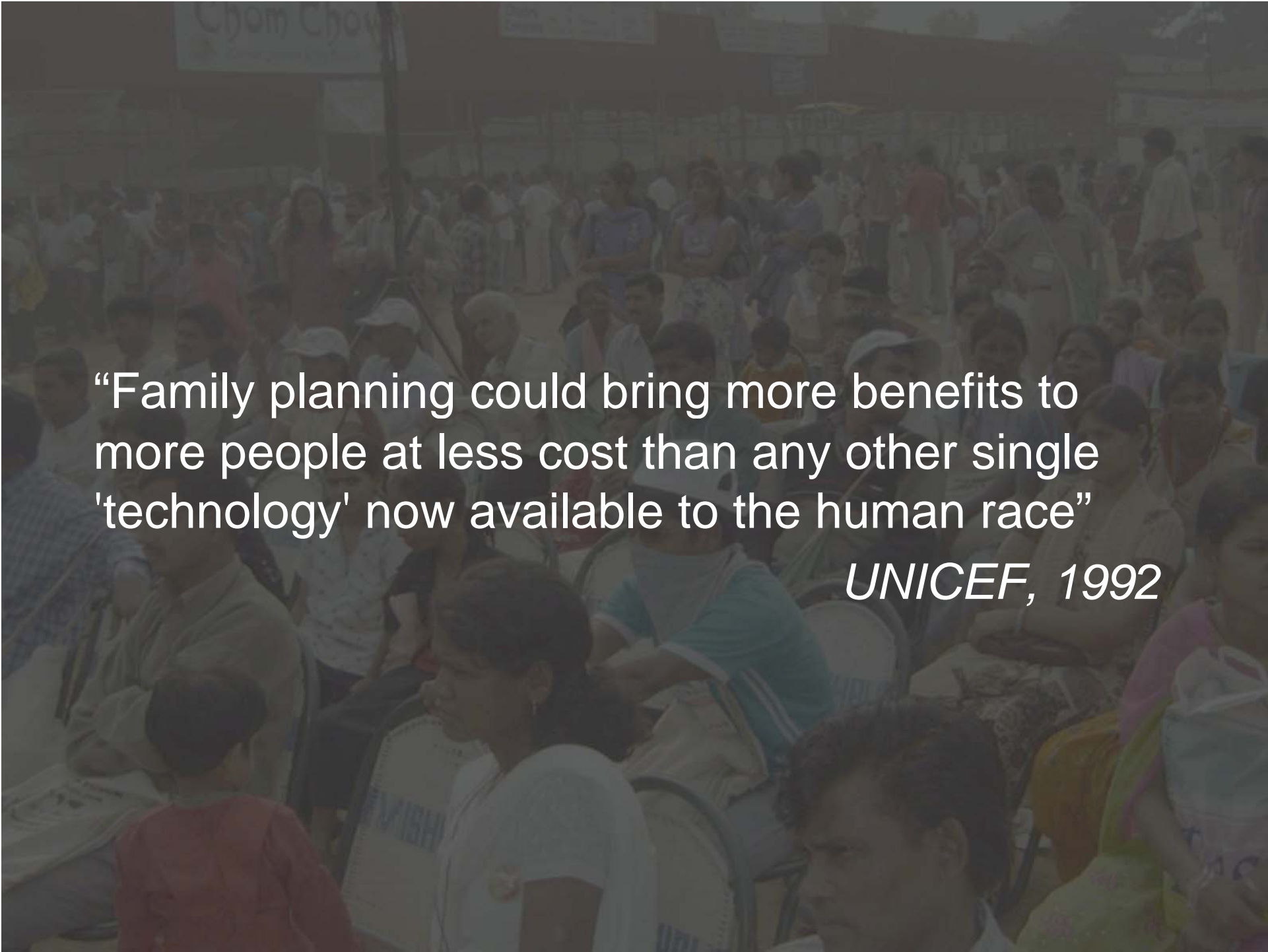
London School of Economics  
Operational Research



## The Study

### *Fewer Emitters, Lower Emissions, Less Cost*

- Sponsor: Optimum Population Trust (OPT)
- Question: If family planning (FP) reduces future CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, what is the cost per abated tonne?
- Purpose: To compare cost-effectiveness of FP to “green technologies”



“Family planning could bring more benefits to more people at less cost than any other single 'technology' now available to the human race”

*UNICEF, 1992*

# How Can FP Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions?

Money Spent on Family Planning



Increased Awareness of Family Planning and Access to Contraception



Reduced Birth Rate



Reduced Population Growth Rate



Reduced Future Population



Reduced Future CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions

# Current Global Projections

Population, 2050	9.15 billion
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions, 2010-2050	1,325 Gt
Unmet need, 2009	201 million
Unintended <i>births</i> in 2009	15 million

# The Proposal

“Meet” unmet need



Unintended births reduced by 72% (UNFPA)

# Global Projections with Proposal

Population, 2050	8.64 billion
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions, 2010-2050	1,291 Gt
Unmet need, 2010-2050	0

## Findings, 2010-2050

Total CO <sub>2</sub> abated by proposal	34Gt
Total cost	\$220 billion
Cost per abated tonne of CO <sub>2</sub>	\$7

Is FP cost effective as a “green technology”?

# Cost-Effectiveness of Family Planning Compared to Selected Carbon Reducing Technologies and Proposals

	<b>\$/ tCO<sub>2</sub>e (2020)</b>
Geo-thermal	-9
Sugar Cane	6
<b>Family Planning</b>	<b>7</b>
(Reduced Deforestation)	13
Switch-Grass	18
Wind	24
Solar	51
Plug-In Hybrids	92
Electric Vehicles	131
<b>Total Low Carbon Technologies</b>	<b>32</b>

## Some Points to Consider

- Savings from reduced social services?
- Discounted cost of proposal
- Other GHGs that contribute to CO<sub>2</sub>e
- Demand stimulated by FP proposals?
- Obstacles to implementation

## Recommendations

- Cost-effective carbon-reduction action will include family planning as a primary method
- Further studies to calculate cost-effectiveness of global FP in reducing:
  - Emission levels of all GHGs
  - Maternal mortality rates
  - Infant mortality rates
  - Cost of social services

# Communicating about FP and the Environment

- “Cost-effective” is heard by international leaders and policy/decision makers
- Need to integrate more messages about how FP can contribute in a cost effective way to managing environmental resources



**OPT Website:**

[www.optimumpopulation.org](http://www.optimumpopulation.org)

**Full Report (including references):**

*Fewer Emitters, Lower Emissions, Less Cost*

[www.optimumpopulation.org/reducingemissions.pdf](http://www.optimumpopulation.org/reducingemissions.pdf)

**Email:**

[tom\\_wire@hotmail.com](mailto:tom_wire@hotmail.com)