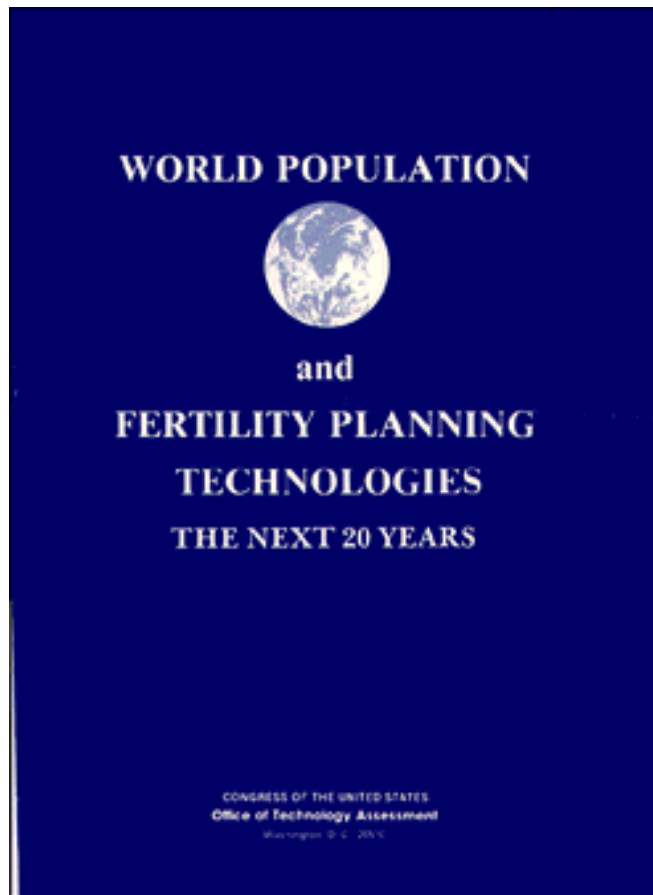


*World Population and Fertility Planning
Technologies: The Next 20 Years*

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Foreword

By the year 2000, the world's population is projected to increase by between 1.5 billion and 2.1 billion people. About 92 percent of this rise will take place in the less developed countries (LDCs). Birth rates are falling in most of these countries, but because the largest generation of young people in history is reaching childbearing age, the annual increase in global numbers is expected to rise from 80 million this year to 95 million annually by 2000.

Rapid population growth in the last 20 years is a result of improvement in health and agriculture technologies. Increased options for fertility change have also resulted from advances in science and technology. Because its mission includes foresight on emerging issues related to science and technology, OTA determined in 1978 that an objective analysis was timely and appropriate in providing Congress with improved insight in this area. The topic was discussed with Members of Congress and letters endorsing the study were received from the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the House Committee on Science and Technology, and the former Subcommittee on Child and Human Development of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. Permission to undertake the study was granted by OTA's Technology Assessment Board in response to a request by the Director.

This report covers the status of current and projected technologies that affect fertility change. It presents current projections for population growth to 2000 and the implications of this growth; identifies the determinants of fertility change; reviews current reproductive research and contraceptive R&D; discusses the factors that influence the acceptance, distribution, and use of fertility planning technologies in LDCs; and examines past and current U.S. funding arrangements in support of population assistance requests from LDCs.

Issues and options developed for Congress include Federal support of contraceptive R&D; product liability and the contraceptive industry; effective patent life; export of non-FDA approved drugs; levels of funding for international population assistance; and distribution of population assistance funds.

The Office of Technology Assessment was assisted in the preparation of this study by an advisory panel of individuals representing a wide range of backgrounds, including demographic and family planning research, the pharmaceutical industry, health policy analysis, ethics and philosophy, and organizations holding differing views on current reproductive issues. Sixty-six reviewers drawn from universities, nongovernmental agencies, and the private sector provided helpful comments on draft reports.

The Office expresses sincere appreciation to each of these individuals. As with all OTA reports, however, their content is the responsibility of the Office and does not necessarily constitute the consensus or endorsement of the advisory panel or the Technology Assessment Board.



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