Written submission by Roger Martin, President, Population Matters

1. Prevention versus Treatment
For several years after the discovery of anti-retrovirals, treatment took precedence over prevention, aid allocations to family planning programmes under the common label ‘Population’ dropped dramatically, rapid population growth compounded all development problems, while targets commonly set in terms of %ages rather than absolute numbers, obfuscated the fact that growing numbers of people were suffering infection and poverty. We congratulate DfID on having now clearly moved beyond this, with their target to reduce the absolute numbers of new infections.

2. The importance of condoms
In an AIDS environment, condoms are an essential health complement to fertility-reduction programmes based on LARCs etc; but even used on their own are uniquely useful in, as it were, making survival dependent on foregoing reproduction. They should remain a key ingredient in all such programmes.

3. The wider benefits of family planning
Integrating HIV/AIDS prevention with fertility-reduction programmes like FP2020 can make both more cost-effective in achieving far wider benefits for no extra cost. Thus the same dollar spent on HIV/AIDS prevention also: abates nearly a ton of carbon (via the lifetime emissions of never-conceived children); improves mother and child health; improves food, water and energy security; empowers women; stimulates economic development; reduces deforestation, land erosion and environmental degradation; protects biodiversity; reduces civil unrest and conflict; reduces unemployment and exploitative labour; improves school attendance and attainment; saves many dollars in unneeded aid for infants and mothers; and increases the impact of all other climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

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