

Population Growth and Policy Options In Sub-Saharan Africa

John Bongaarts Ph.D.

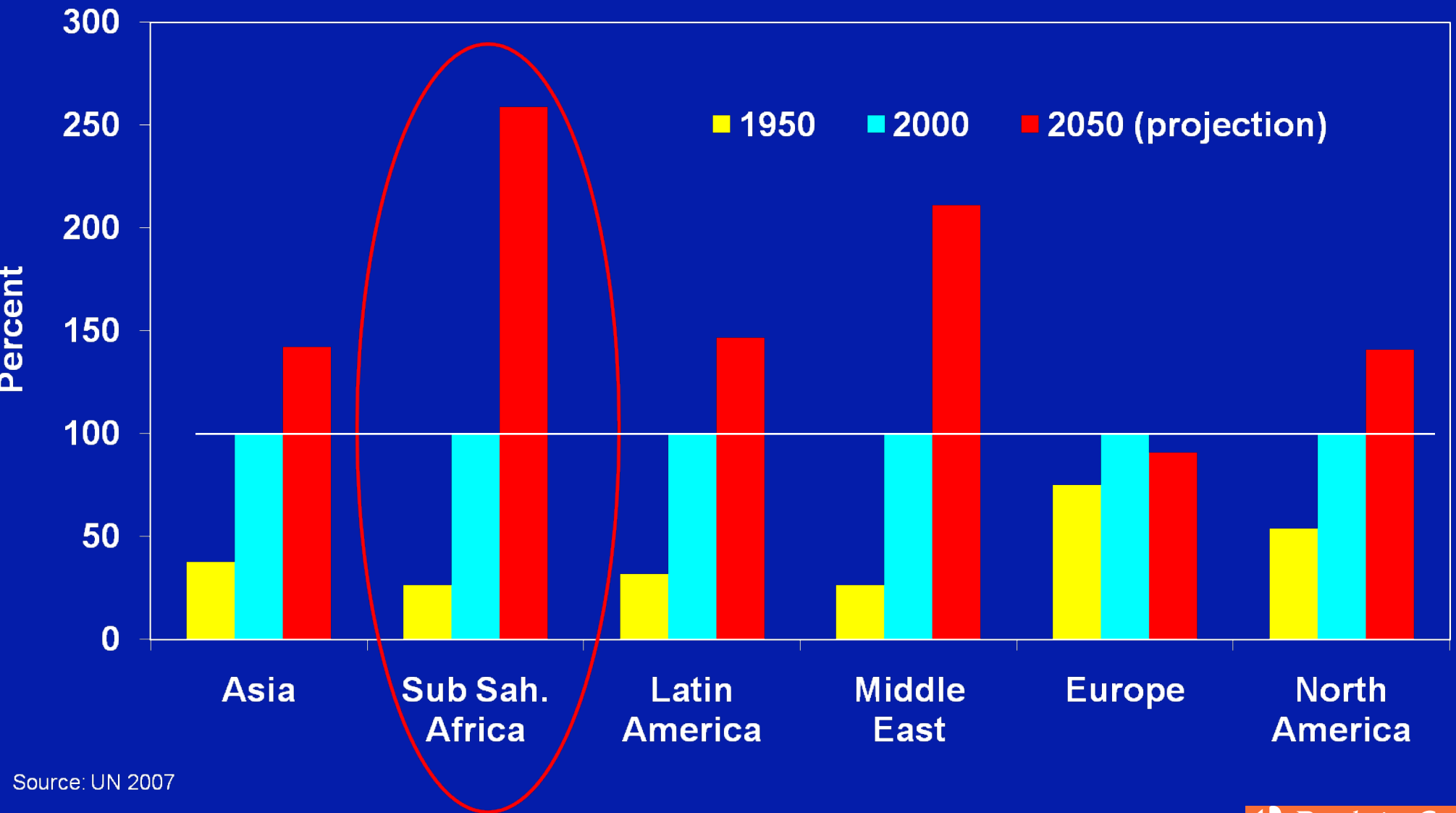
Vice President and Distinguished Scholar

Population Council, New York

Outline

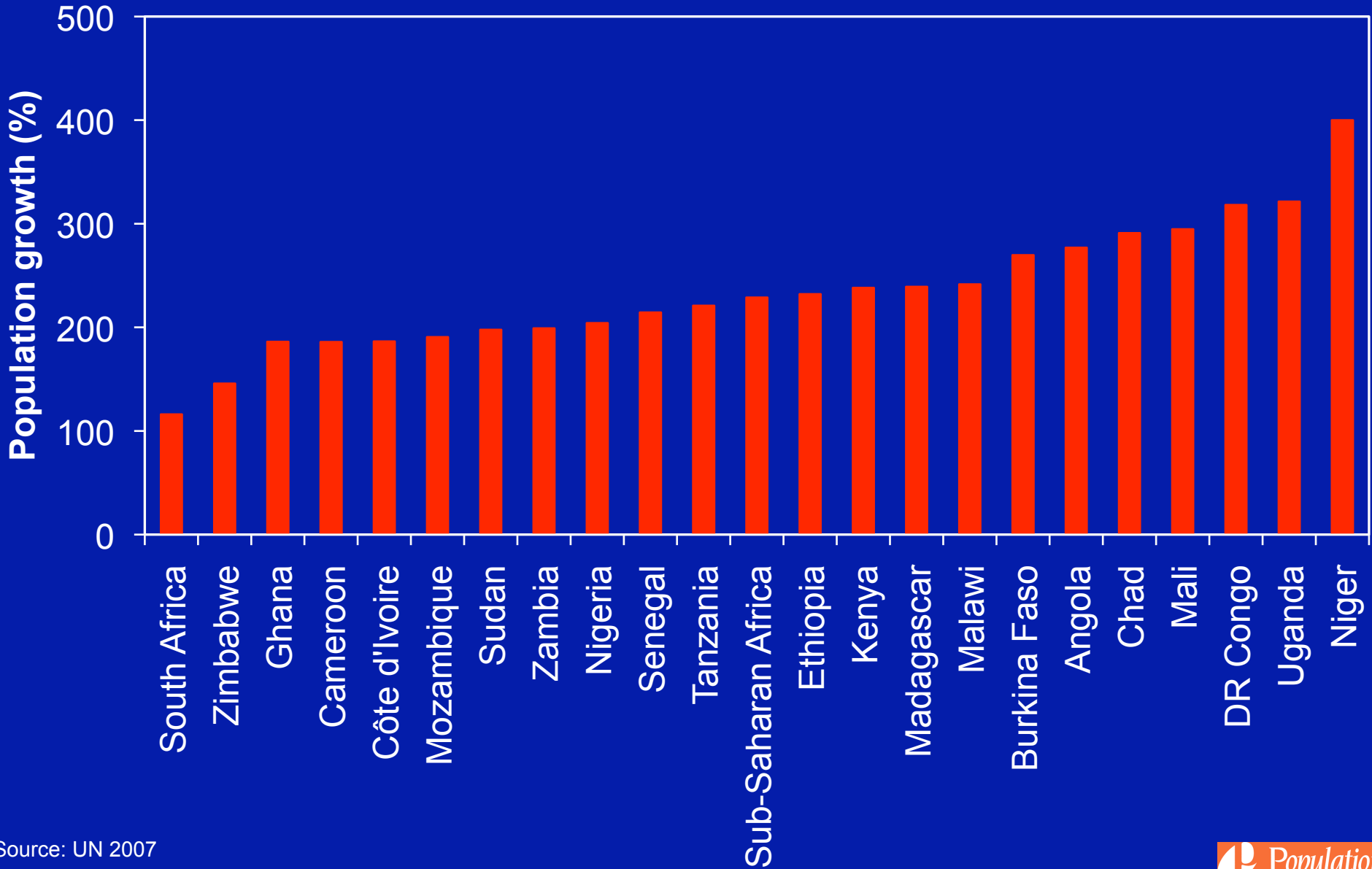
- 1) Population trends
- 3) Impact of the AIDS epidemic
- 4) Benefits of family planning programs

Population trends by region 1950-2050 (2000=100)



Source: UN 2007

Population growth 2005-2050 (2000=100)



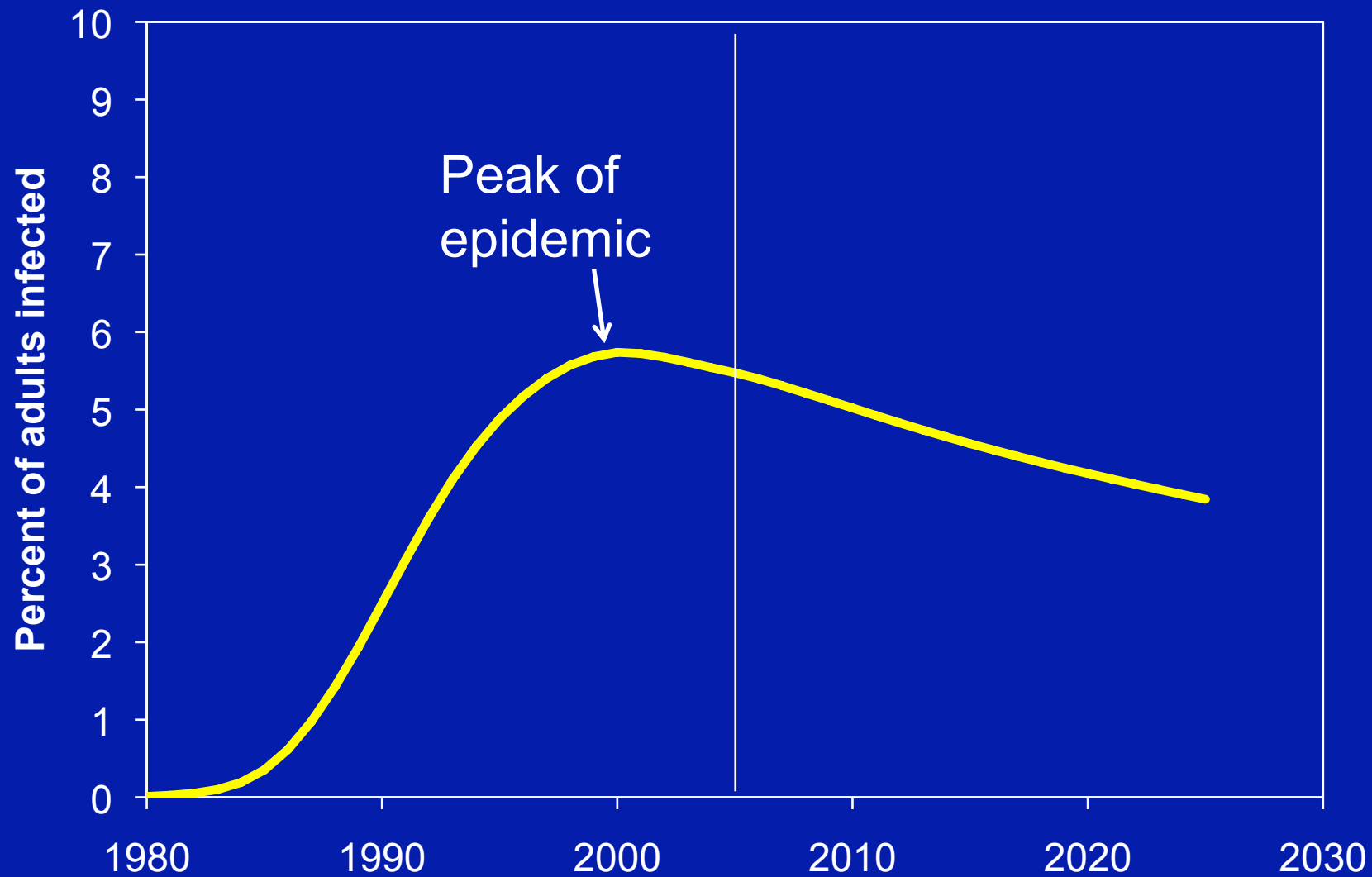
Source: UN 2007

Adverse effects of rapid population growth

- Environmental: Depletion of natural resources, pollution, climate change
- Economic: Low wages, unemployment, poverty, inequality
- Governmental: Lagging investment in education, health services, and infrastructure
- Health: High birth rate raises maternal and child mortality
- Political: Growth of unrest

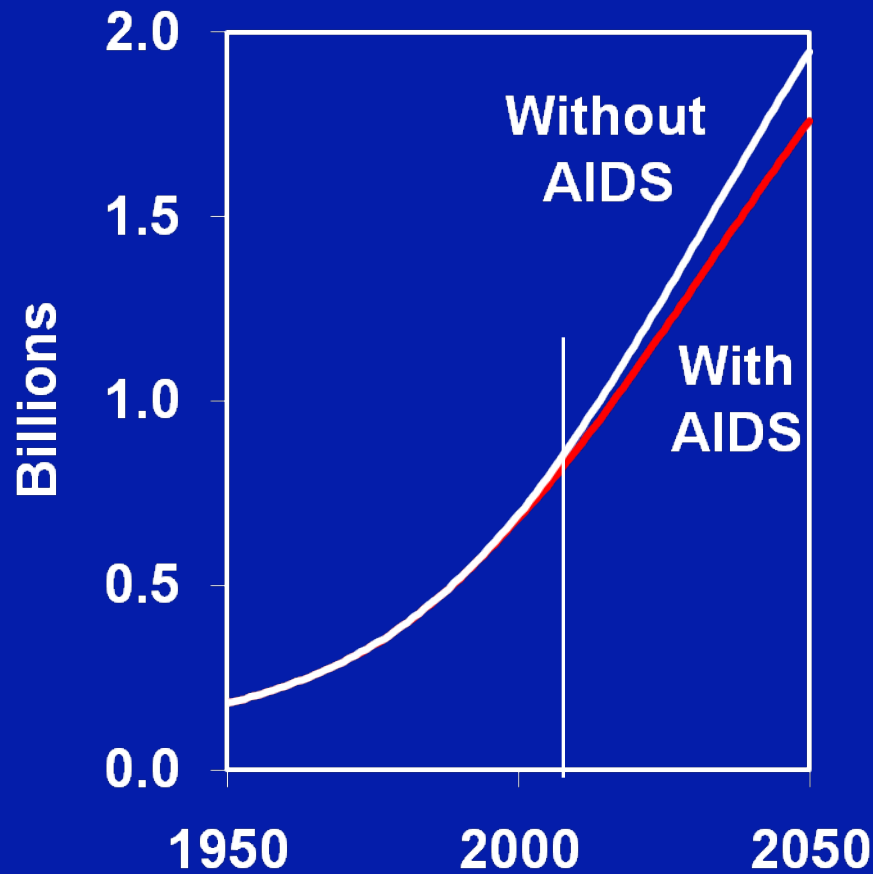
The demographic impact of the AIDS epidemic

HIV infection level in sub-Saharan Africa

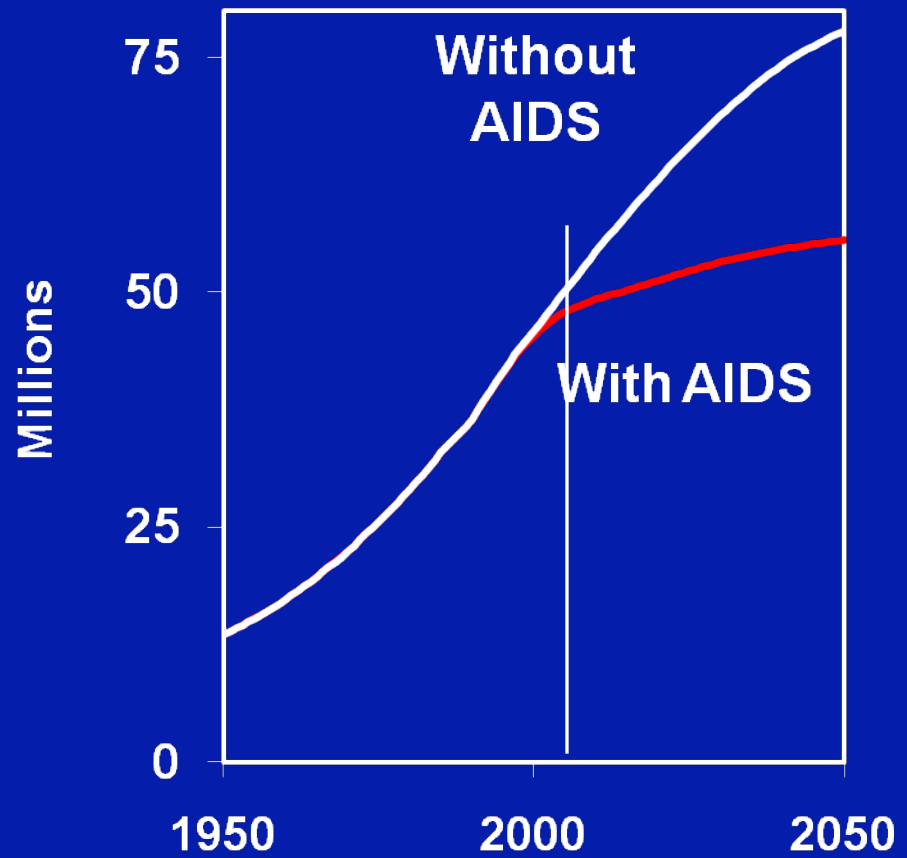


Population size

Sub-Saharan Africa



South Africa



Source: United Nations 2007

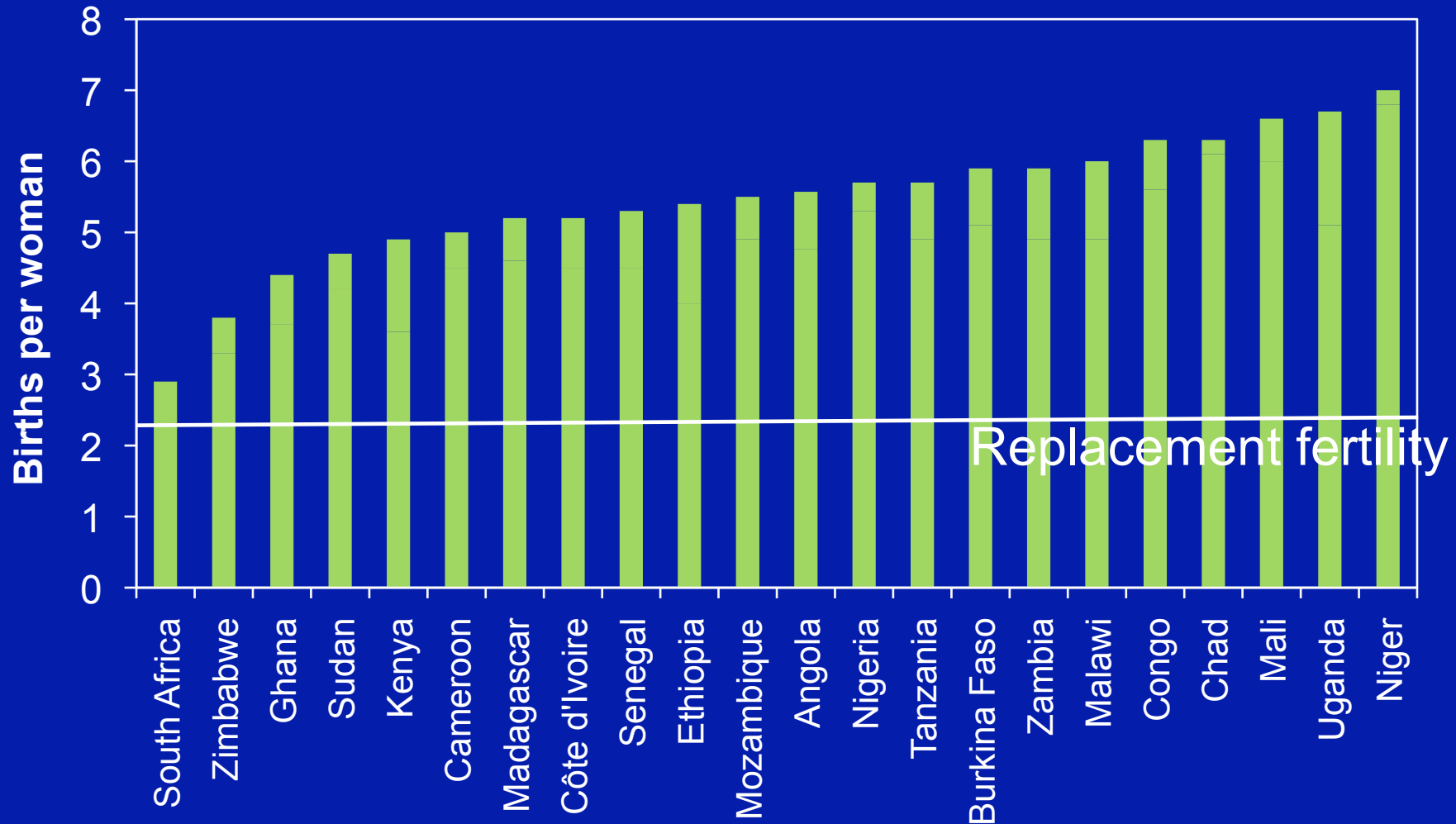
The benefits of family planning programs

**123 million women in the developing world
have an unmet need for contraception**

Objectives of family planning programs:

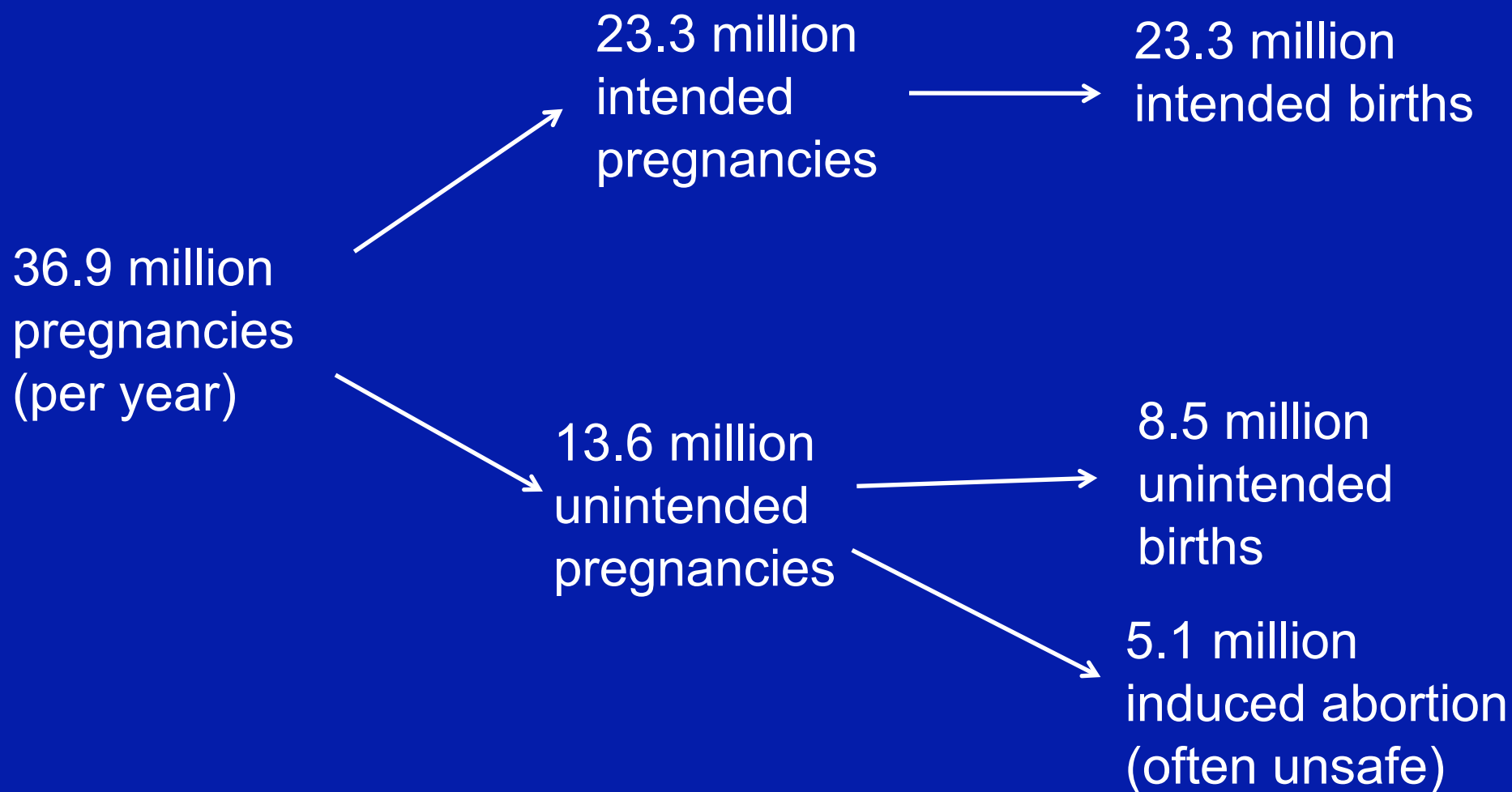
- **Provide access to and information about contraception**
- **Reduce unintended pregnancies**

Fertility levels 2000-2005



Source: UN 2007

Pregnancy outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa, 2003

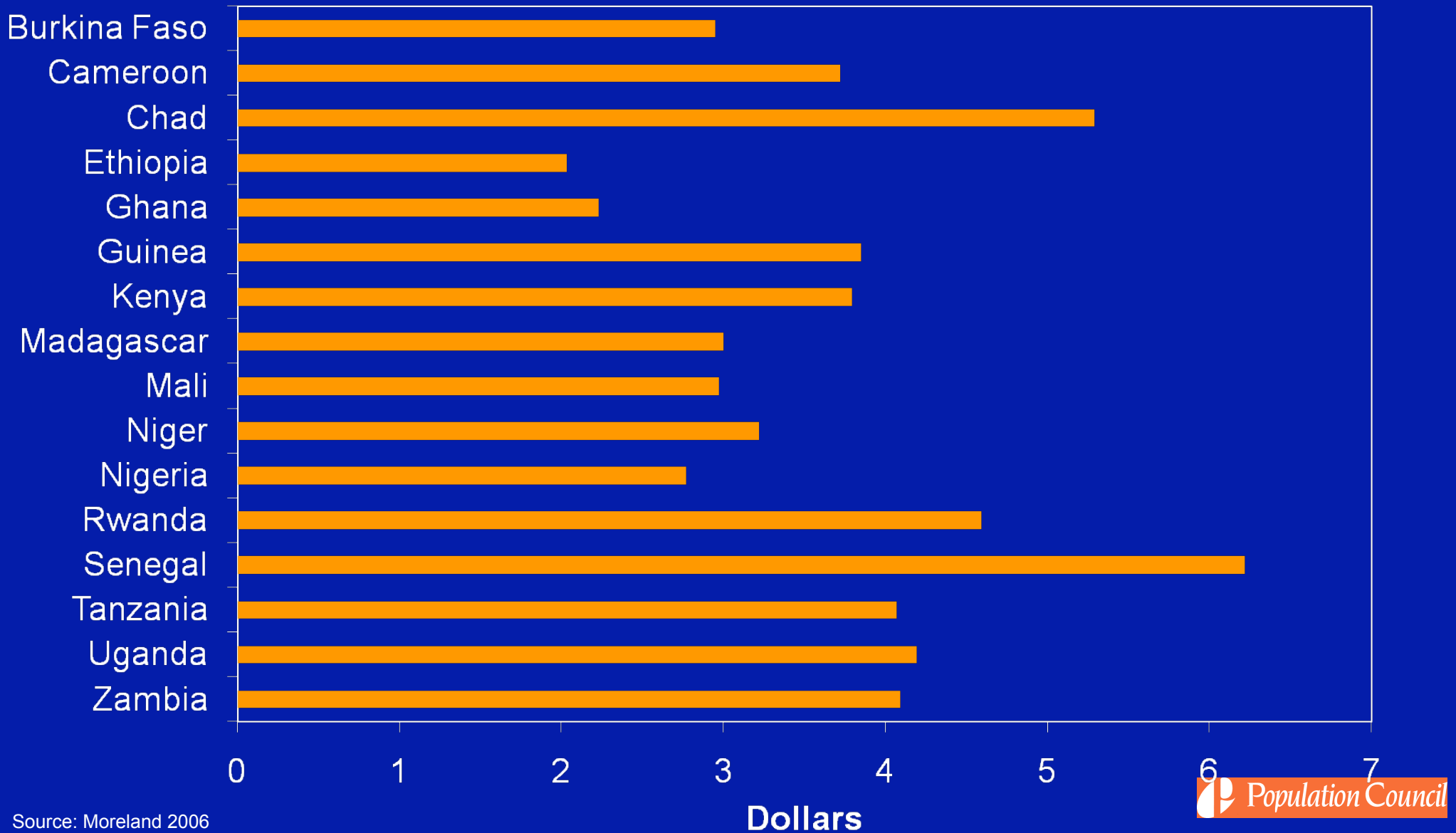


Source: Vlassof et al 2005. Miscarriages excluded

Reducing unintended pregnancies and population growth contributes to:

- Reducing child mortality and improving maternal health
- Achieving universal primary education
- Ensuring environmental sustainability
- Combating HIV/AIDS
- Reducing poverty and unemployment

Development gains from \$1 invested in family planning



Source: Moreland 2006

Conclusions

- 1) Rapid population growth continues in much of sub-Saharan Africa despite the AIDS epidemic.
- 3) Rapid population growth has substantial health, socioeconomic, environmental, and political consequences.
- 3) Strengthening family planning/RH programs is highly cost-effective.