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German Foundation for
World Population (DSW)

On World Population Day 2009:

DSW calls for a greater investment in woman and girls to fight poverty

Brussels, 11 July 2009. **On the occasion of World Population Day 2009, the German Foundation for World Population (DSW) wants to draw attention to the linkages between population growth and poverty and the key role of women and girls on this issue.** “The lack of access to family planning, especially to modern contraceptives, is a central cause for high rates of population growth in many poor countries. If we want to reduce poverty and hunger, family planning, education and health care for women require more political and financial support,” demands Karen Hoehn, Director of International Affairs of the German Foundation for World Population (DSW).

Already, women around the globe experience higher rates of unemployment and poverty. The current economic and financial crisis is expected to hit women harder than men, with severe consequences for families. The loss of women’s income also has a negative implication for child health because women in developing countries bear the disproportionate burden of caring for children.

Moreover, the decisions women take concerning the number of children they have has direct effects on a country’s population, and thus on its economic development. Investments in family planning are economically reasonable and beneficial - especially in times of economic crisis: **“Every Euro invested in family planning saves up to 31 Euro for the provision of social services, such as education, sanitation and housing”**, explains Ms. Hoehn. “Ban Ki Moon is right to point out that **investing in family planning can save the lives of half a million mothers** and release an estimated \$15 billion in productivity a year.”

Background Note:

On the eve of World Population Day 2009, humanity will count 6.794.627.616 people on earth – a new high. World population continues to grow at a rate of 80 million citizens annually, and developing countries bear the brunt of this rapid population growth: it is estimated that by the year 2050, the number of people in developing countries will increase to nearly 8 billion people. As a consequence, the pressure on developing country health and education systems will increase, and the already poor nutrition and health situation in many of these countries could worsen considerably.

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