

## World Population Day 2017 Break the Taboo on Family Planning

New UN-Projections foresee that by 2050 more than 9,8 billion people will live on Earth. This rapid growth confronted by limited resources make it even more difficult for states to sustainably guarantee good living conditions for all people. Africa is the continent with the highest population growth rates, the population there is expected to double until 2050. In line with the population growth, the challenges we all face grow each day. Limited resources, unemployment, malnutrition and growing social disparities are just a few consequences of a growing population, which is getting younger and encourages people to migrate. Over 40 % of the population in Africa is younger than 15 and their share is growing.

However, within the growing 'youth bulge', especially in African countries, lies a huge potential which is often neglected. Countries with a particularly young population are the best candidates to strive for the 'Demographic Dividend' using the economic growth potential. To reap a demographic dividend, a country needs to lower the fertility rate whilst simultaneously invest in education, health and employment. The latest UN-projections have shown that the fertility rate in Africa remains with 4,7 children per woman still way above the envisaged goal of 2,1 children per woman. Today more than 220 million women in developing countries have no access to family planning methods, although they want it.

The Rotarian Action Group for Population & Development (RFPD) believes that it is this generations' moral responsibility to develop a world capable to treat all people equally now and in future. This includes initiating the 'Demographic Dividend' in Africa and most noteworthy to improve the access to family planning. Therefore, RFPD on World Population Day 2017 calls on all Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations to unite and break the taboo on family planning. After implementing relevant projects for more than 20 years RFPD is convinced that it is possible to substantially improve the access to family planning and offer modern contraceptives to all women and men. Family Planning needs massive support not only financially but also regarding raising awareness and offering professional family planning services.