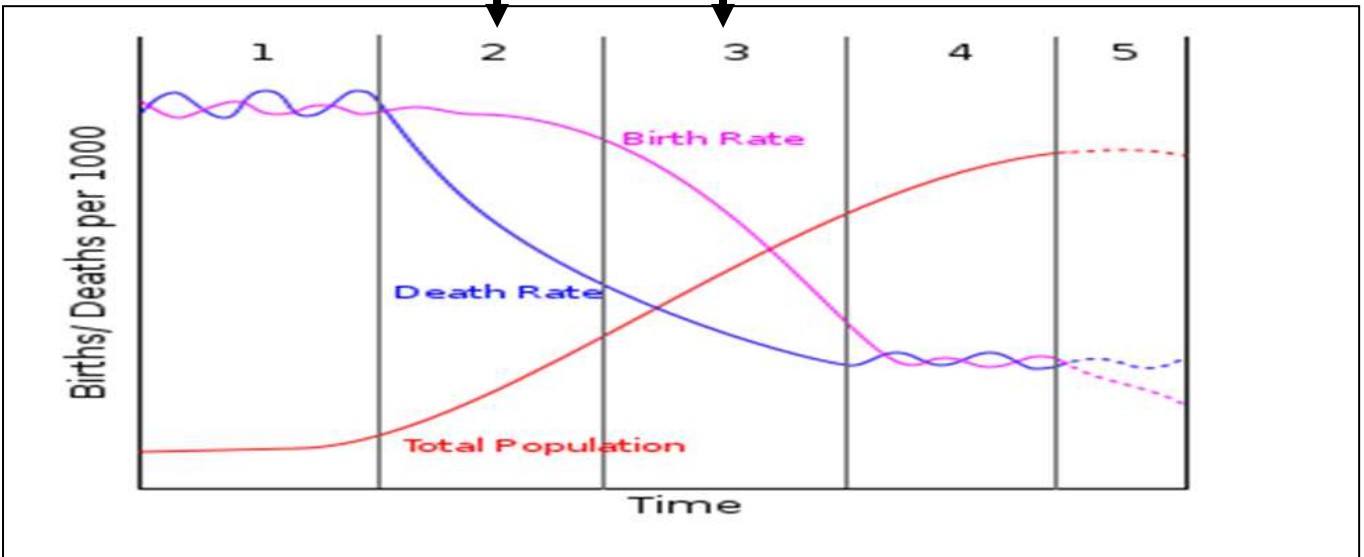


YOUTHFUL POPULATIONS

Typical of countries in stage 2/3 of the Demographic Transition, the early and late expanding stages, where Birth Rate is well above Death Rate. Especially true of stage 2 and to a lesser extent stage 3 where birth rates start to fall.



This is particularly the case for Sub Saharan Africa, for instance in **the Gambia**, in West Africa and the Sahel.

- Birth Rate 40/1000
- Death Rate 10/1000
- Growth Rate 30/1000
- Natural Increase 3% (was 4.2%)
- Doubling Time 30 years
- Fertility Rate 5.6
- Literacy Rate 40%
- Contraception uptake 10%

Dependency ratio :-

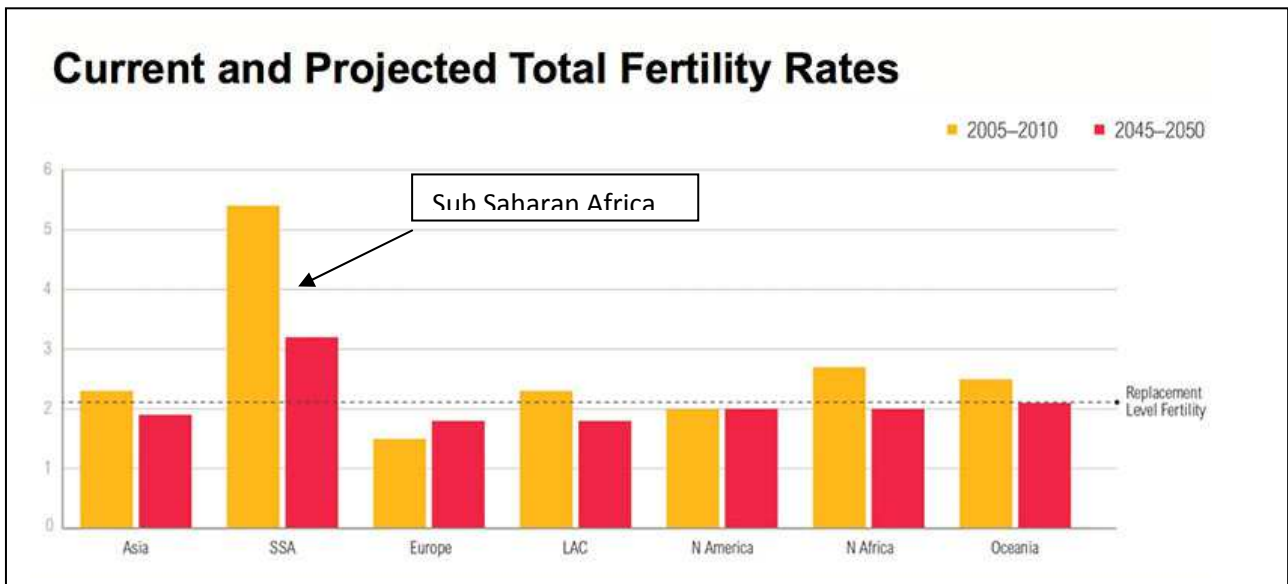
$$\frac{\%<16 + \%>65}{\% 15-64} \times 100$$

$$\frac{46 + 3}{51} \times 100 = 96\%$$

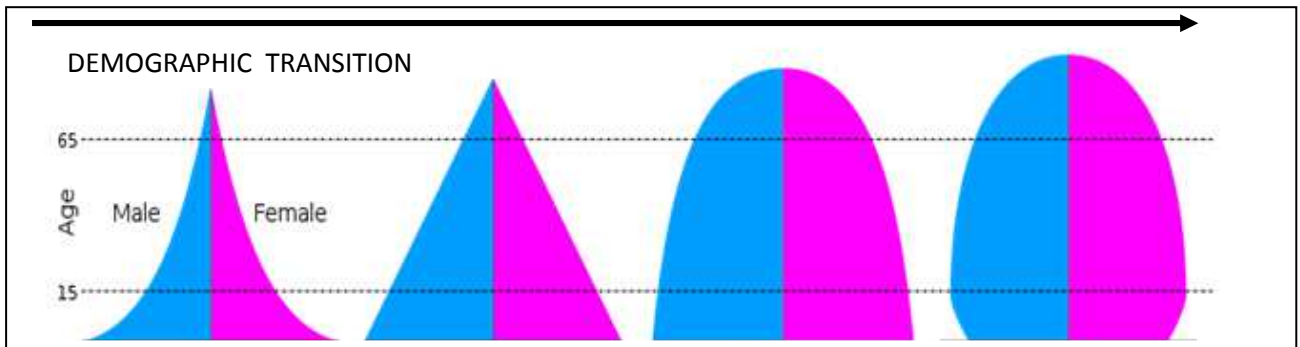
This is poor; active /working population is low

Why is the Birth Rate so high?

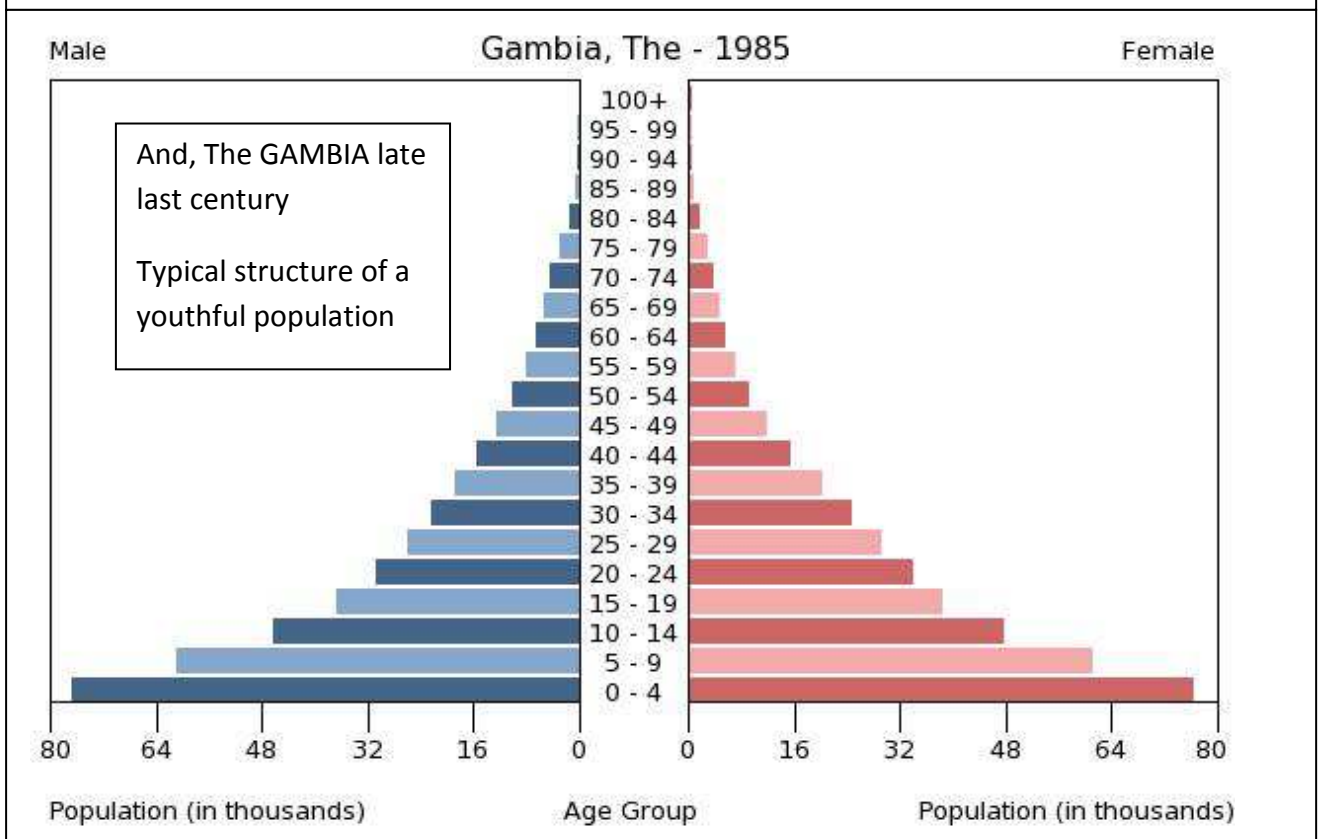
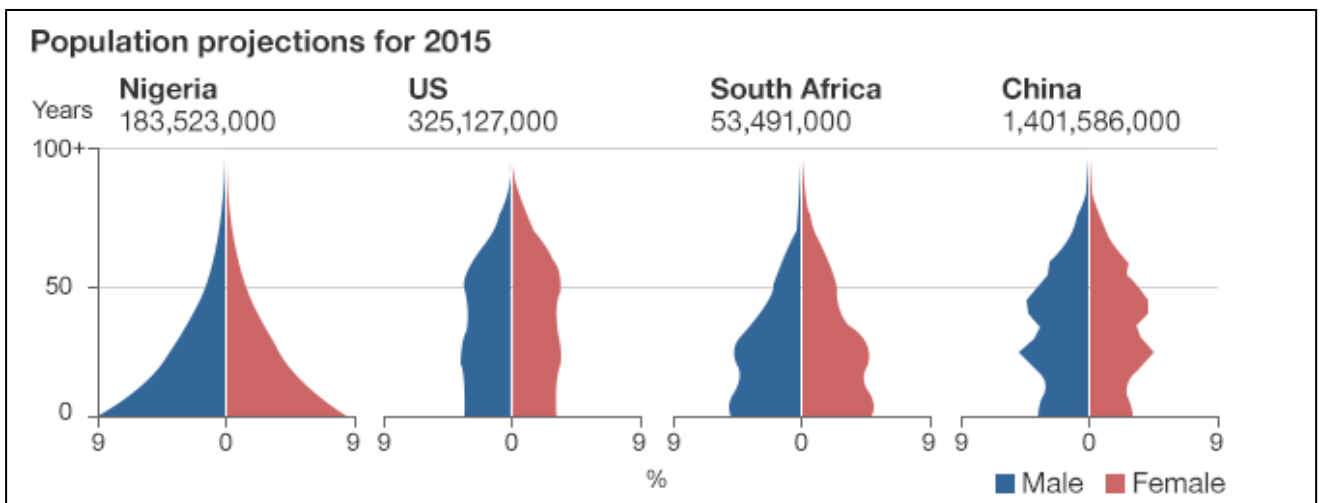
95% Muslim population, Religious/Cultural factors, status of large families, limited role of women in society/little emancipation, no security in old age, need for a workforce in a dominantly agricultural society, high Infant Mortality Rate (IMR 55/1000)



This has a marked impact on the Population Structure as seen in population pyramids. The shape of the pyramid and the % of the population in each of the age ranges <15, 15 – 64 and 65 and over changes through the Demographic Transition. This also determines the important Dependency Ratio figure.



Now compare the pyramids below for different countries around the world in different stage of the Demographic Transition. Nigeria is also typical of Sub Saharan Africa.



PROBLEMS OF A YOUTHFUL POPULATION

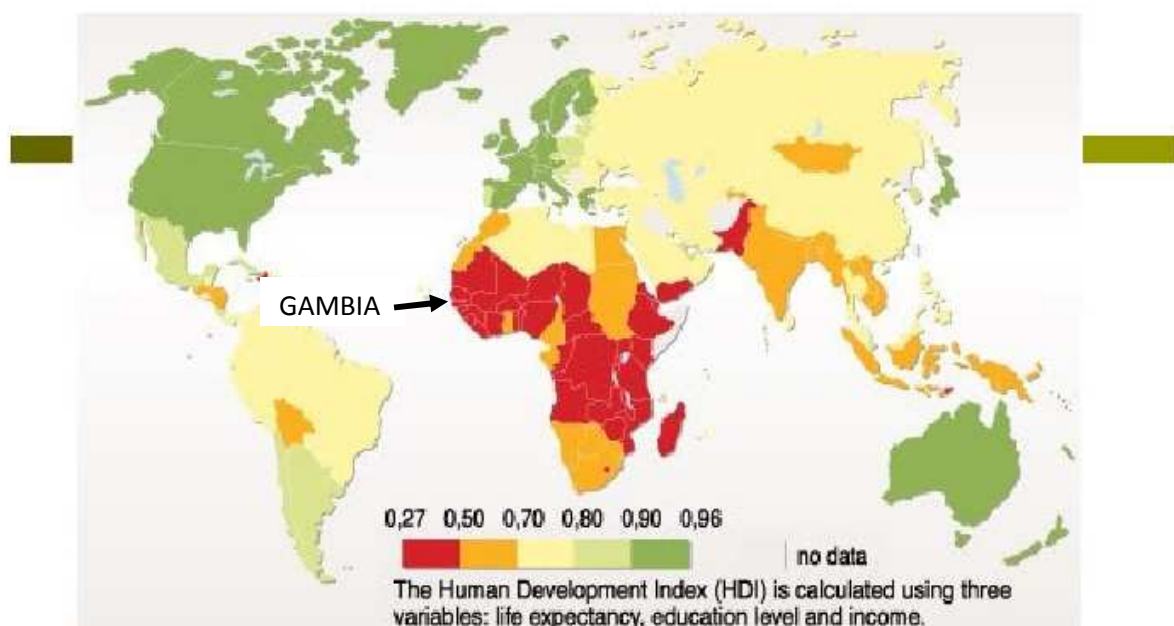
SUB SAHARAN CHALLENGES - GAMBIA

- High Dependency Ratio brings problems of financing all aspects of care for the under 16's
- Resources are needed for Health care, Maternity care and Education
- Overpopulation is a problem in a rapidly growing population (doubling time 30 years) and in a densely populated country (169 persons per km²)
- This leads to problems with low income (GNP \$1500 per capita), food resources and high rates of poverty and malnutrition (rated 168 out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index – HDI)
- Gender inequalities prevail, HIV rates are high
- Overcrowding in poor housing; sanitation poor; rapid rural-urban migration especially to capital city, Banjul; growth of shanty towns.
- Overpopulation leads to degradation of the environment. Over grazing, over-cultivation and deforestation compound soil erosion and promote Desertification
- Climate change, the failure of the late summer south west monsoon rainfall, erratic rainfall and increased incidence of droughts lowers agricultural production making problems worse
- Pressure on the limited infrastructure, unemployment and underemployment are high
- Youthful population and limited resources leads to political stresses, unrest and possible IS problems

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

GLOBAL PATTERNS

SUB SAHARAN AFRICA IS CLEARLY THE LEAST DEVELOPED AREA IN TERMS OF INCOME, EDUCATION AND LIFE EXPECTANCY



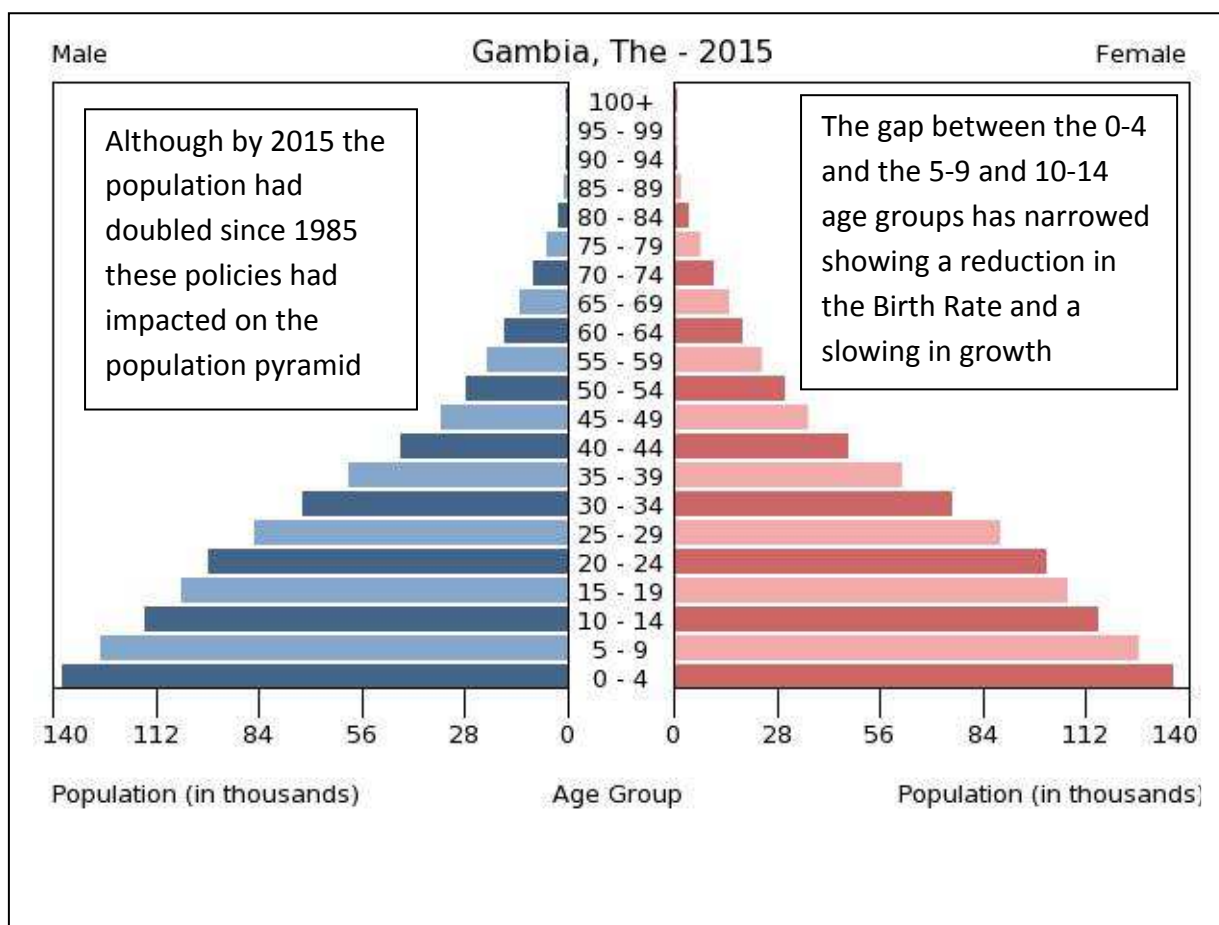
STRATEGIES / POLICIES / MANAGEMENT

The overall aim is to speed up the Demographic Transition. To lower the growth rate (Natural Increase) and improve the Dependency Ratio.

- **LOWERING THE BIRTH RATE**
 Making education more universal, especially of women
 Increase the uptake of contraception (still low)
 Encourage spacing of births
 Helped by NGO's; WHO and 'Futures'. Advertising/radio campaigns and free contraceptives, especially in the rural areas

- **HEALTH CARE**
 Improved maternity care and lowering of the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)
 HIV policies
 Free vaccination programmes

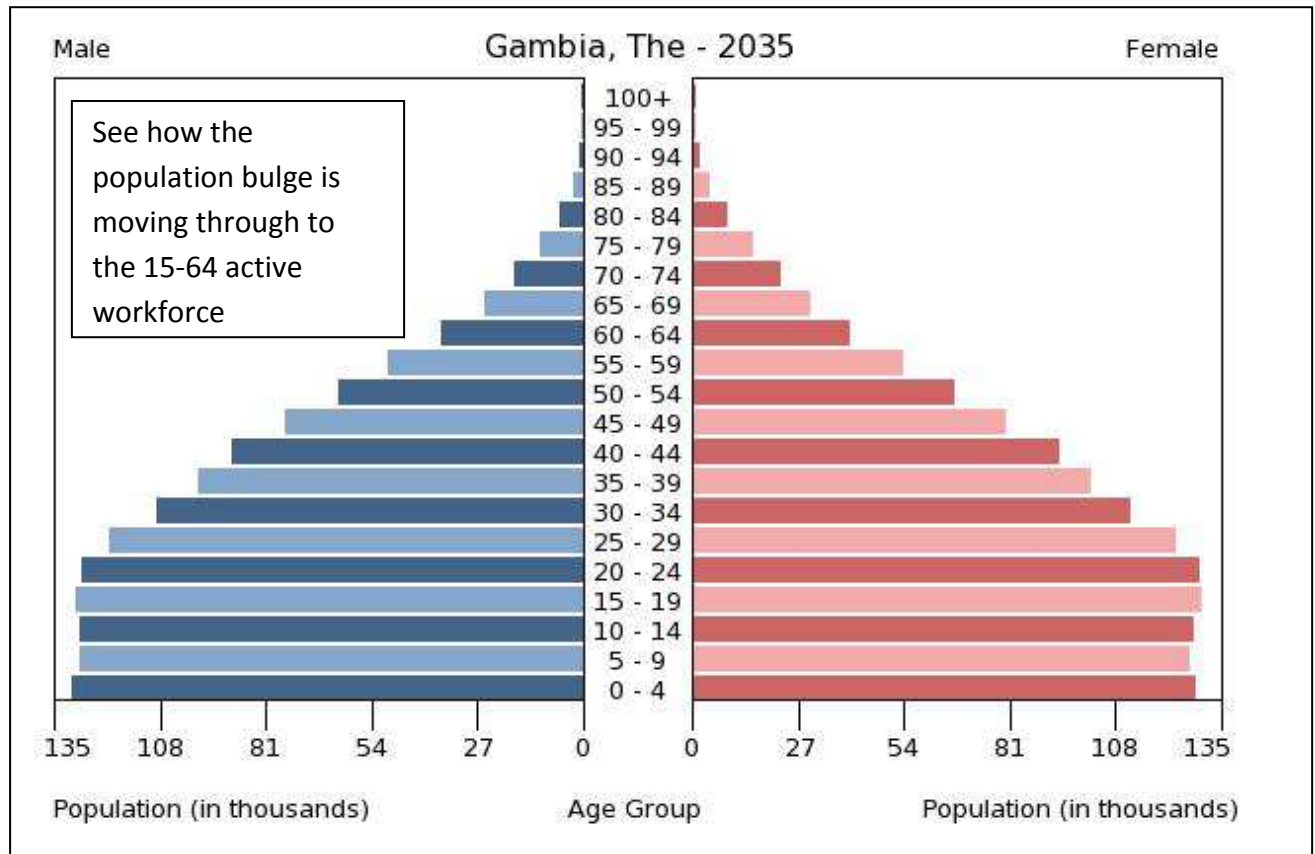
- **ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMMES**
 Forest management, preventing deforestation and structured replanting
 Improved farming methods to prevent soil degradation and conserve water
 Drilling of wells to improve water supply



YOUTHFUL POPULATIONS - AN OPPORTUNITY?

If Birth Rate policies begin to be successful the large numbers of young people in the population pyramid will become a 'bulge' in the working age (15-64) population, lowering / improving the Dependency Ratio.

Look at the population pyramid projected for the Gambia for the year 2035



At the moment Sub Saharan Africa has 44% of its population under 15 and a Fertility Rate of 5.5, the highest figures in the world. If the Birth and Fertility rates can be lowered the country may enjoy a DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND.

Less money will need to be spent on Health care, Education can improve, infrastructure and economic output will improve. This was the basis of the 'Economic Miracle' of East Asia, and there is no reason why it cannot occur in Sub Saharan Africa.

It will need later marriages, improved family planning as well as Political and Economic stability. Money will need to be invested in the infrastructure and foreign investment encouraged, but the bulge in the working age population offers both a growing workforce and a growing home market.

This Demographic Dividend is, however, short lived as the bulge will eventually work its way through to the over 65 age group and the country will then have the problems of an ageing population.