The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) at Cairo is widely considered a landmark event. At the ICPD, ‘diverse views on human rights, population, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality and sustainable development merged into a remarkable global consensus that placed individual dignity and human rights, including the right to plan one’s family, at the very heart of development’ (UNFPA). This consensus, enshrined in the Programme of Action (PoA), also offered, for the first time in an international policy document, a transformative and holistic definition of reproductive health.

1 The ICPD PoA defines reproductive health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system” and expands further on this in Paragraph 7.2, linking it to reproductive rights in Paragraph 7.3. (UNFPA, 2014. Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development: 20th anniversary edition. p.59-63)

However, there are still a number of important issues remaining. The ‘consensus’ at ICPD was always a fragile one, with major divisions between member states which linger today. The very notion of ‘target-driven’ population policy which ICPD sought to reject is still in place in many parts of the world. Progress towards many of the goals of ICPD have been slow and uneven; and some even argue that a new population and development consensus is required to better reflect the low fertility world characterised by rapid population ageing and, in some cases, population decline.

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the ICPD in 2024, the Journal of Applied History (JoAH) is happy to announce a special issue devoted to the topic of population, development and the ICPD. JoAH offers a platform and an opportunity to bring the results of historical research to bear on the present, on the issues

Call for Papers

Special Issue: Journal of Applied History

Re-evaluating the International Conference on Population and Development After Thirty Years

Guest editors (in alphabetical order):
Stuart Gietel-Basten, Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (stuart.basten@ku.ac.ae)
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that (should) concern us today. It seeks to promote historical thinking as an essential element of discussions about the challenges that our societies are now confronted with. It is our aspiration to enable Open Access to this volume (funds permitting).

Interrogating the ICPD through an applied history lens offers an interdisciplinary and critical perspective on the ‘watershed’ moment of 1994 and its implications for today’s fraught population, reproduction, and development landscape. The editors invite a broad range of contributions, ranging from shorter (1,500-2,500 words) interventions and review essays to slightly longer (4,000) research papers. We welcome submissions from a range of contexts and on a broad variety of topics, including, but not limited to:

- 20th century population policy
- The lead-up to ICPD
- Negotiations at the ICPD
- The discourses and framings shaping the ICPD PoA
- Historical research on the implementation of ICPD principles and actions and lessons learned from this
- Theoretical/critical approaches to ICPD principles and actions
- Drawing lessons from the past thirty years to restate/update the ICPD for a new demographic landscape

We are particularly interested in papers exploring how higher-income countries have approached ICPD both in terms of funders and applying ICPD principles to their own changing demographic circumstances.

**Process**

- Abstracts of ±500 words to be received by March 15th 2023. They may be sent to the guest editors: rishita.nandagiri@kcl.ac.uk or stuart.basten@ku.ac.ae
- Following initial review, authors of abstracts selected for inclusion informed April 1st 2023
- Deadline for first draft of paper, August 1st 2023
- First round of peer review (performed by other authors in special issue) completed by September 1st 2023
- Revised manuscript submitted by October 1st 2023
- All papers complete and ready for publication by 1st January 2024