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LABOR AND POPULATION

Evaluation of the Population and Poverty Research Initiative (PopPov)

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Preface

Since 2005, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, with collaboration and co-funding from research councils in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and Norway and from the World Bank, has invested in a portfolio of social science research on the relationship between population dynamics and micro- and macroeconomic outcomes; the portfolio is known as the Population and Poverty Research Initiative (PopPov). The initiative also supports doctoral dissertation fellowships, conferences, and a range of dissemination activities.

In November 2012, the foundation issued a request for proposals (RFP) for an evaluation of PopPov, to help guide the foundation's decisions about both the substance and means of future investments in it. The RAND Corporation was selected to conduct the evaluation.

This report should be of interest to individuals who have been supported by PopPov or otherwise involved with PopPov activities; researchers, donors, and advocates with interests in population and development; and analysts who may conduct evaluations of similar initiatives. The summary is also available as a stand-alone executive summary (DaVanzo et al., 2014).

The research reported here was conducted in RAND Labor and Population, part of the RAND Corporation. For more information about RAND Labor and Population, see <http://www.rand.org/labor.html>.

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Summary

Since 2005, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, with collaboration and co-funding from research councils in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and Norway and from the World Bank, has invested in a portfolio of social science research on the relationship between population dynamics and micro- and macroeconomic outcomes. It is known as the Population and Poverty Research Initiative (PopPov), and its geographic focus is on sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The starting premises that led to the development of PopPov were that evidence showing that population dynamics could affect economic outcomes might increase the interest of ministers of finance in funding population policies and that they might be most convinced by rigorous research done by respected economists. The core aim of the program has been to build (or, in some cases, rebuild) and advance the field of economic demography, orienting the work toward research that would be relevant for policy and would increase recognition by economic policymakers of the value of lowering the rate of population growth and investing in family planning (FP). The program also aimed to strengthen the capacity of researchers in SSA. The PopPov initiative tried to achieve these aims through four main components: (1) grants to support research on PopPov core topics of interest, (2) fellowships to support graduate students preparing their doctoral dissertations, (3) conferences and workshops to support the development of networking opportunities, and (4) other dissemination activities. PopPov has funded 56 doctoral fellows and, together with its partners, has supported 61 research projects. Seven international conferences and additional workshops have been held, and there have been several other dissemination activities. The Population Reference Bureau (PRB) and the Center for Global Development (CGD) have been the secretariats for PopPov. Since 2008, the Institute of International Education (IIE) has administered the fellowship program.

In November 2012, to help guide its decisions about both the substance and means of future investments, the foundation issued a request for proposals (RFP) for an evaluation of PopPov. The RAND Corporation was selected to conduct the evaluation. The RFP for the evaluation asked four evaluation questions (EQs):

- EQ.1. To what extent did PopPov reengage or strengthen the field of economic demography?
- EQ.2. What contribution has PopPov research made to the evidence base regarding relationships between demographic change or behavior and economic outcomes?
- EQ.3. How and to what extent did PopPov investments yield policy-relevant and influential research?

- EQ.4. How did the design of the PopPov program affect its ability to build the field, expand the evidence base, and inform policies and practices? How did the implementation of the PopPov program contribute or pose challenges to achieving these outcomes?

Background and History of PopPov

In 2004, the Hewlett Foundation supported CGD to form and convene the Population and Development Working Group to develop

a research agenda to investigate the relationship between reproductive health [RH] and population dynamics, and key features at household, community and national levels, . . . with a special focus on the type of research that would be useful to economics and health sector policymaking by national governments and donor agencies working in sub-Saharan Africa. (CGD, 2005b, p. 2)

The working group identified four research questions (RQs) on which they felt empirical research would be useful for the medium-term policy agenda:

- RQ.1. Given the projected trends in fertility and mortality changes, what are their implications for economic growth and income distribution and the incidence of poverty?
- RQ.2. How does investment in RH affect economic conditions at the household level, including the productivity, labor force participation, and saving behavior of women, children, and households?
- RQ.3. How do different types of investments in RH affect the health of women and children?
- RQ.4. How do the type and organization of services affect their effectiveness, including the ability to reach poor and vulnerable populations?

These became the research questions that PopPov has sought to address. The working group identified four priorities for data collection:

- the collection of both *demographic and economic information* as part of *cross-sectional household data*
- the collection of *panel data* in a site in SSA
- the development of *subnational data* in several relatively large countries
- the seeking of opportunities to use *random assignment evaluation* methods (randomized controlled trials [RCTs]).

Also with Hewlett Foundation funding, in May 2005, CGD conducted the Policy Roundtable on Economic Development and Population Dynamics, a discussion with key experts to enhance the policy relevance of the research agenda. It concluded that studying the relationship between RH and economic outcomes at the household, community, region, and national levels was an important area of inquiry; that timely dissemination of new evidence to policymakers should be a priority; and that finance ministers are a key audience for this type of research. The round table helped shaped Hewlett staff's thinking about the types of evidence

needed to convince policymakers, such as high-caliber research by highly regarded international and local researchers.

The PopPov Research Grant Program

In October 2005, the Hewlett Foundation made a grant to PRB to select and fund *teams of research excellence* at internationally recognized universities to study the intersection of population, FP, and RH with economic development. Initially, PRB held two funding competitions:

- by invitation only, to create teams of U.S.-based researchers; this supported two research projects, and relatively little of the research was on SSA.
- an open competition, to create global teams that included Africa-based researchers; this supported four research projects, all on SSA.

The Hewlett Foundation viewed economists at the World Bank as a key target audience for research showing, presumably, that population and RH can affect poverty and economic outcomes, and foundation staff felt that World Bank decisionmakers would be most convinced by research done by economists at the bank and that ministers of finance would listen to economists at the bank. In December 2005, the foundation made a grant to the bank, which was matched by an equal amount of World Bank funds. The bank had an internal competition for these funds, resulting in 15 projects.

Four European organizations have participated as partners in the PopPov effort: the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), which has supported four research projects; the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, or NWO) WOTRO Science for Global Development (three projects); l'Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD) and l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD) in France (seven projects); and the Research Council of Norway (RCN) (six projects). Each of these European partner organizations received funds from the Hewlett Foundation and matched these with a near-equal amount of its own funds. Each partner has focused on researchers in its own country (in collaboration with those in the developing countries being studied), though the French funded researchers in any EU member country.

For the first several years of PopPov, PRB and each of the European partners had a separate call for proposals. In 2012, PRB and three of the European donors developed a common joint call for research that was a collaborative initiative of researchers from one or more of the participating countries with researchers from developing countries, with priority given to SSA.¹ There was no particular emphasis on economics like there had been in some other PopPov RFPs. All research teams invited to submit a revised proposal were required (and funded) to hold a meeting with stakeholders in the study country. Six proposals were funded: one by WOTRO, one by RCN, two by ESRC, and two by PRB.

PopPov Dissertation Fellowships for Doctoral Students

In late 2005, the Hewlett/PRB Dissertation Fellowship program was created, with the goal of increasing the skills of the next generation of researchers to (1) do research on topics at the intersection of population, FP, and RH with economic development and (2) communicate effectively to policy audiences. PRB was the initial implementing institution for the fellowship

¹ The French were not involved because they had already expended their PopPov resources.

program, and fellowships were initially available only to students studying at a university in the United States or Canada. In late 2007, the administration of the fellowship program moved to IIE, and the fellowship program was expanded to students studying at universities in SSA.

From the inception of the program through 2013, 365 applications have been received, and 56 fellows have been selected, of whom 40 (71 percent) are economists. Eight of the funded fellows have been students studying at a university in SSA, one at a university in Canada, and the rest at U.S. universities. Four of the fellows who have studied in the United States or Canada are nationals of a country in SSA. As of August 2013, 36 of the fellows are known to have completed their Ph.D.'s, 15 are still in progress, and one dropped out of the program; there are no recorded outcomes for the remaining four. In 2008 and 2009, there were separate calls and separate reviews for U.S.-based and Africa-based candidates. The reviewers judged the applications from SSA to be academically less rigorous than those from the United States and Canada. After the 2009 competition, it was decided to combine the call for applications into one call for all students and to select the strongest applications overall, regardless of where the student matriculates; this represents a shift from attention to field-building in SSA toward a stronger emphasis on research rigor.

PopPov Annual Conferences

There have been seven PopPov conferences—London in November 2006, Arusha December 2007, Dublin January 2009, Cape Town January 2010, Marseilles January 2011, Accra January 2012, and Oslo January 2013—and the eighth will take place in Nairobi in January 2014. The conferences bring together fellows and researchers funded by PopPov with some non-PopPov researchers and some advocates and policymakers to expose them to the latest research findings and encourage interaction among them. Hence, the conferences have aspects related to various PopPov goals—field-building, building up of an evidence base, and dissemination to policymakers. Nearly 500 people have attended at least one PopPov conference. More-recent PopPov conferences were opened competitively to outside researchers, in contrast to previous conferences that were mostly PopPov members presenting PopPov research. Discussants have tended to be former or current principal investigators (PIs) and “friends of PopPov.” In recent years, there have been preconference workshops on communications and methods, open to all conference attendees. In 2013, a poster session was added.

Methodological Approaches for the Evaluation

Our evaluation is based on several types of information:

- *information from records or reports or available online*, including information on the PopPov website, such as PopPov conference programs and lists of publications; the “State of PopPov” (SOPP) report (Lee and Belohlav, 2013); and previous evaluations of PopPov conferences, research output, and policy relevance
- *key-informant interviews* with nearly 100 individuals, both those who are part of the network and those outside, which collected both factual information and subjective impressions about PopPov
- *an online survey* we designed and administered to solicit information and the opinions of PopPov fellows and PIs and co-PIs of research grants regarding all aspects of the ini-

tiative. The first part of the survey, administered to fellows and PIs, collected objective information on the characteristics of the respondent, his or her projects, and papers and key presentations coming out of the research. The second part, administered to all respondents, was anonymous and collected information on the respondent's opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of various aspects of the PopPov initiative. The overall response rate to the first part of the survey was 65 percent (83 percent for fellows and 49 percent for PIs of research grants). Response rates were lower for Part 2 (68 percent for fellows, 39 percent for PIs, and 38 percent for co-PIs).

From these various sources (and follow-up email correspondence with some respondents, as well as reviewing some of the papers), we have formed a database with entries for the 259 papers we identified as having been written with PopPov funding.

Findings for the First Three Evaluation Questions

This section summarizes our findings for the first three evaluation questions. We cover EQ.4 in our recommendations at the end of this summary.

Evaluation Question 1. To What Extent Did PopPov Reengage or Strengthen the Field of Economic Demography?

PopPov has increased the number of economists working on PopPov issues, although many of these were already working on these topics or, in the case of the fellows, intended to work on them. The initiative has not brought many new senior researchers into the field. This is partly the result of the design because the initial competition and the direct grants were by invitation only to people already in the field. However, there have been a few notable exceptions, and the program has enabled researchers already in the field to do more than they may have been able to do without PopPov funding (e.g., additional fieldwork). It has also increased the number of European researchers working on population, health, and development topics.

The majority of the doctoral fellows funded by PopPov are economists. Many view the fellowship program as PopPov's biggest success; it has reached many who would not have been eligible otherwise for dissertation funding. Many of the fellows are continuing to do research on PopPov topics. The newly instituted alumnus grants for fellows are helping several of them do this.

However, a considerable amount of PopPov support for research grants has gone to non-economists, and 75 percent of the journal articles so far produced with PopPov funding have been in non-economic journals.

Evaluation Question 2. What Contribution Has PopPov Research Made to the Evidence Base Regarding Relationships Between Demographic Change or Behavior and Economic Outcomes?

As of August 2013, we identified 259 papers supported by PopPov—an impressive number. Of these, 68 have been published in journals, eight are book chapters, and 27 are under journal review. Nearly half (46 percent) of papers prepared for PopPov are on the questions regarding the effects of demographic variables on economic outcomes (broadly defined, e.g., to include education); 27 percent are micro analyses (RQ.2), while 19 percent are macro (RQ.1). Another

14 percent of the papers address RQ.3 (on how investments in RH affect the health of women and children), while 3 percent address the effectiveness and equity issues of RQ.4. However, more than one-third of the papers are not on one of the four PopPov research questions; many of these (24 percent) look at topics outside the scope of these questions (e.g., marriage, migration), while others look at the effect of the economic variables on fertility and RH variables—the opposite of the direction of causation in RQ.1 and RQ.2.

Some PopPov research has been published in prestigious journals, e.g., *The Lancet* (two articles) and *The American Economic Review* (four articles). Of the 68 journal articles based on PopPov research, 17 (25 percent) are published in economics journals; this is low for a program that sought to rebuild the field of economic demography and for which the majority of those funded are economists. The same percentage of articles based on PopPov research appears in demographic or FP and RH journals. Although this makes sense because the projects address the intersection of demographic and RH issues and economic ones, it is largely “preaching to the converted” because readers of these journals already appreciate the importance of demographic factors. Just over one-quarter of the papers are published in medical or health-related journals, and just less than one-quarter are published in other types of journals, mainly those of other social sciences.

When asked about the most-important research contributions of the PopPov initiative, some survey respondents and key informants mentioned research on economic effects of fertility, particularly research on the demographic dividend and simulation effects of fertility on economic growth; research on natural experiments of the impact of shifts in FP access; and research using randomized controls. However, many survey respondents and key informants showed a lack of awareness of PopPov’s research contributions.

Consistently with the CGD recommendation, more than 100 of the papers prepared for PopPov have used panel data. Eight respondents reported that they used data from RCTs or experiments. Sixteen projects reported doing original data collection (quantitative or qualitative or both). However, the analytic method used most often is ordinary least squares regression—a method that the CGD working-group report implicitly criticized as not being good for inferring causality. The next-most-used method is instrumental variables, which is one of the methods recommended by the CGD working group.

Evaluation Question 3. How and to What Extent Did PopPov Investments Yield Policy-Relevant and Influential Research?

One of PopPov’s aims was to generate research findings that would increase attention from economic policymakers about the value of lowering the rate of population growth and investing in FP. Although there are notable exceptions, it seems that relatively few researchers assigned a high priority to translating their research into policy messages or presenting their findings at forums likely to be attended by policymakers (and many of the research projects did not address questions related to the value of lowering the rate of population growth or investing in FP). It is difficult to judge the actual policy impact of these activities, but we found that many who could potentially use PopPov findings in their policy, communication, or advocacy work have little, if any, awareness of PopPov and the research it has supported. In general, the research projects funded by the European partners have made more effort than those supported by the U.S.-based partners to involve local collaborators in the research and to involve stakeholders in the process, thereby increasing the visibility and potential policy impact of the

findings, although the research funded by the Europeans was less likely to address the high-priority PopPov questions.

Recommendations About Particular Aspects of PopPov

The Hewlett Foundation will have to make decisions about the future of PopPov based on the foundation's current objectives and available resources. After reflection, the foundation may wish to shift focus to either more-deliberate field-building work or to more policy-oriented activities. We feel that much of the PopPov initiative has added value and can be improved, but, to some extent, the field-building and policy aims are separable. Whether the foundation chooses to pursue a comprehensive agenda in the future or a more focused one, there are changes to consider based on experience to date. We conclude with our recommendations about the PopPov initiative in general, the research program, the fellowship program, increasing research capacity in SSA, the conferences, and other dissemination activities.

PopPov

The PopPov initiative has reenergized the field of economic demography as applied to the study of the interrelations between population and development in developing countries, generated a considerable body of research on these issues, and supported a new generation of researchers working on them. PopPov has generally been well run and flexible. It has had periodic evaluations done of aspects of the initiative and tried to be responsive to their suggestions. It has tried new things—e.g., a poster session at the annual conference, stakeholder meetings, opening the fellowship program to doctoral students at institutions in SSA, the grant program for alumnus fellows—all of which have enhanced the program. The initiative has supported a dedicated core of reputable researchers through competitive grant-making with serious peer review and emphasis on excellence in research; it has connections to credible research and communication organizations, such as the World Bank, PRB, CGD, and partner organizations in Europe. (Compared with that supported by U.S. partners, the research supported by the European partners has tended to use less sophisticated analytic methods and has been less focused on PopPov research questions, but more of it has been on SSA, and more of it has involved local researchers and stakeholders.)

However, there are inherent tensions among the aims that PopPov has sought to achieve: research rigor, field-building (at all levels of seniority), policy relevance, applicability to SSA, capacity-building in SSA, and increasing attention to population and development issues in Europe. The current initiative has given higher priority to some of these objectives (particularly, research rigor, training of doctoral fellows, and increasing attention in Europe), often at the expense of others. There are other sources of funding (e.g., National Institutes of Health [NIH] and National Science Foundation) for sophisticated, cutting-edge research and the collection of large-scale, high-quality data; this per se is not Hewlett's comparative advantage. The foundation should look for niches for which little funding is currently available (e.g., for training researchers from developing countries). Decisions about involvement of partner organizations should then be made consistently with the initiative's objectives. Having a dedicated group of experts advising the initiative who are paid for their time and who will give the initiative the necessary attention should increase the likelihood that activities are conducted consis-

tently with program goals and should improve the coordination among aspects of the initiative and potentially competing goals.

We feel that PopPov merits continuation but should consider some changes:

- Explicitly state and prioritize objectives of a future version of PopPov and then design strategies to achieve these objectives.
- Focus on activities and goals that are the foundation's comparative advantage.
- Establish a standing steering or advisory committee for PopPov. The steering or advisory committee should include people with expertise and experience relevant to the initiative's goals (e.g., experts who are knowledgeable about policy issues, about identifying and communicating to target audiences, and about research issues and capacity-building in developing countries); researchers of relevant disciplines should also be represented.

The Research Program

PopPov has produced a considerable body of research. However, less than half of the research is on the questions of the effects of demographic factors on economic outcomes that initially motivated the development of the initiative. It is perhaps time to focus more on the specific questions asked, translating the research results into credible policy recommendations, and communicating those recommendations to key target policymakers. Accordingly, if the research program is continued, we recommend the following:

- Be more directive about the topics to be addressed (and take that directiveness seriously during the review process). We recommend that a new working group, which includes policymakers, be convened to frame researchable questions that are of greatest interest to policymakers and program managers. Among the topics they might consider are the following, suggested by key informants (including policymakers) with whom we spoke:
 - the social and economic benefits of public investments in RH (e.g., whether FP is a public good)
 - which FP and RH interventions work and why
 - contraceptive discontinuation
 - equity issues
 - the payoffs to investments in FP and RH versus those to investments in other areas (e.g., malaria, rural roads).
- Rather than suggesting the use of specific types of data or methods or focusing on a particular discipline, encourage applicants to propose the types of data and methods that are most appropriate for their research questions.
- Consider awarding some larger grants that could cover the high costs of useful experiments and collection of panel data, even if doing so requires reducing the total number of grants.
- Consider making some grants for longer periods of time if this allows for the achievement of research goals (e.g., enabling time for data collection).

In order to enhance its policy relevance, PopPov should do the following:

- Include more reviewers of research proposals with policy and program experience.
- Give more weight to policy relevance in making decisions about projects that will be funded.
- Continue the stakeholder meetings that are held for teams invited to submit full proposals. These have helped increase buy-in from relevant parties within the countries being studied.
- Consider having a daylong workshop with groups of fellows and junior researchers in which they come up with potential approaches to a problem designed with the help of policymakers. This may result in ideas for potential research projects.

In order to build research capacity in SSA and research on SSA, PopPov should do the following:²

- Give priority to proposed projects that include a training component (e.g., a pre- or post-doctoral fellow or junior researcher from SSA), although doing this may imply larger grants so that the training can be incorporated in a substantive way.
- Assess the extent to which research on PopPov questions on countries not in SSA, whether or not supported by PopPov, has had useful policy implications for SSA or could be useful in encouraging new policy-relevant research in and on SSA.

Fellowships and Field-Building

The fellowship program has succeeded in supporting new, well-trained researchers who have produced a body of rigorous research. The program has filled a noteworthy void, particularly for students who are studying at institutions that do not have training grants from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development or who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.³ We recommend that the fellowship program be continued but with some changes:

- Consider giving priority to applicants for doctoral fellowships from SSA and others from developing countries who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- Support *postdoctoral* fellowships, ideally tied to PopPov research projects, for applicants from SSA and others from developing countries who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- Include a former PopPov fellow on the selection committee.
- Include training on policy communication as part of the PopPov fellowships. For example, the IIE fellows could participate in an abbreviated version of PRB's Policy Communication Fellows program (which is currently available only to researchers from particular developing countries that are supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID]).
- Reinstate the session the day before the annual PopPov conference at which fellows can share their work with, and get feedback from, one another and some senior researchers.

² There is more on this topic under "Increasing Research Capacity in Africa" in this summary.

³ Only U.S. citizens and permanent residents are eligible for NIH training grants.

All the fellows who participated in this found it be very worthwhile and have missed it at recent conferences.

- To enable alumnus fellows to continue to do research on PopPov topics, continue and expand the program of research grants for those alumni.

If field-building continues to be a goal, the *field* should be clearly defined, perhaps in a way that emphasizes topics more than a specific discipline or set of research methods. In order to bring new researchers into the field, the Hewlett Foundation should consider the model of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health and Society Scholars program, which seeks to grow the field of public health research and should see whether there are useful lessons from the efforts of the National Institute on Aging to build the field of behavioral and social research on aging.

Increasing Research Capacity in Africa

About two-thirds of PopPov research projects are on SSA, and a number of these (especially those funded by the European partners) include African collaborators. Sixty percent of all papers prepared for PopPov are on SSA (on countries in both the Anglophone and Franco-phone parts of the region). A program of research that focuses on SSA should also give priority to building the capacity of researchers in that region to conduct research on that region. By now, it has become clear that the starting situation of the African cohort is, on average, far behind that of students elsewhere and that substantial investment in training, mentorship, and supervision will be necessary to bring African fellows up to speed. We believe that postdoctoral training would be a good way to increase research capacity in SSA. Postdoctoral fellowships can enable a recent Ph.D. to fill gaps in his or her training and can provide the “seasoning” that enables him or her to develop capabilities for formulating interesting research questions, obtaining funding, preparing publishable papers, drawing out policy relevance, and communicating with policymakers that very few students learn in graduate school or sufficiently absorb from short workshops or training courses. To further increase research capacity in SSA, we recommend the following:

- Be more proactive in trying to attract high-quality fellowship and research applications from African students and scholars.
- Have a limited number of special slots for African fellows who would spend some time being trained in the United States or Canada or by researchers from those countries and would receive continued mentorship on their return to Africa.
- Support carefully mentored *postdoctoral* fellowships for African scholars. Try to incorporate the postdocs into PopPov research projects to enable mentoring to occur naturally or include funding for mentors’ time so that they can work closely with the postdocs. Previous doctoral fellows from SSA or junior researchers from SSA who have worked on PopPov projects might be ideal candidates for further investment.
- Improve coordination among the Hewlett Foundation’s various initiatives to build capacity in SSA. For example, representatives of each of the African population-training institutions that the foundation supports could meet in conjunction with a PopPov conference, particularly the ones held in Africa, to compare and coordinate efforts and brainstorm about common issues, and they could bring some of their staff or students to the conference.

- Investigate whether there are particular patterns of collaboration with African researchers and students (in other fields also) that are clear best practices for producing well-trained and productive social scientists, and use these as a model for future capacity-building efforts.

Annual PopPov Conferences

Although the majority of researchers had a very positive impression of the conferences (and particularly valued the networking opportunities), there were aspects that respondents criticized, such as timing, the uneven quality of the research being presented, the fact that many of the papers at recent conferences were not on the PopPov research questions, the disciplinary mix (much of the research is by economists, but many attendees are not economists), lack of attention to policy issues (and to making the presentations appropriate for policymakers), the absence of Africans on the podium in earlier years, and the fact that there is a mix of papers on work in progress (on which presenters receive useful feedback) and others that are closer to completion. The focus, particularly in later years, seems to have been to expose the researchers (and nonresearcher attendees) to the cutting edge of research in the field, but this has come at the expense of fellows (who seemed to receive less face time in later years) and of researchers with less finalized projects who nevertheless could have benefited from feedback of those who have faced similar challenges in their own research. We recommend the following regarding the annual conference:

- Continue the PopPov conferences at least until 2016 so that there is time for findings to emerge from the last round of research (which was funded in 2012) and last round of fellows (funded for 2013 through 2015).
- Have the conferences focus more (than the recent ones have) on findings and less on methodology.
- Make the conferences more focused topic-wise, and try to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts, e.g., by having more syntheses and drawing out lessons learned.
- Continue to have non-PopPov research presented at the conferences if it is directly pertinent to the conference's topical focus.
- Continue and possibly expand the poster sessions. These provide a good opportunity for researchers to get feedback on research in its early stages.
- Have longer breaks between sessions to enable more networking.
- Structure the conferences in a way that makes it clear what each part of the conference is about and whom it is targeting. This could help remedy the problem of having multiple goals at the conferences (presentation of completed research versus getting feedback on work in progress, presenting research methodology and findings to other researchers versus disseminating relevant results to policymakers and advocates).
- Alternatively, consider having a separate meeting with policymakers in which researchers make presentations about PopPov and other research with policy-relevant findings, with presentations appropriate for a nontechnical audience.
- Consider publishing conference proceedings (including a summary of discussants' comments and audience discussion) and doing so in a way that it is widely accessible to the population and development communities.

- Have some discussants from outside the network, including development economists who have not worked on population issues and people with policy, program, and advocacy experience, to get some fresh perspectives.
- Invite more top-level academics from African universities and researchers at African population institutions that are supported by the Hewlett Foundation.
- Continue to invite Hewlett/PRB fellows to future conferences if they are still working in the field. (Perhaps have a competition for travel grants, for which applicants would explain how attendance would be beneficial to their career development.) These Hewlett/PRB fellows should be considered as possible session chairs or discussants.
- Consider holding a conference in the United States. This would make it easier for people at such organizations as USAID and the World Bank to attend and should make more likely the participation of U.S. development economists and demographers who are not part of the network.
- Consider holding the annual conference some time other than late January.
- Explore the possibility of piggybacking a PopPov conference onto a meeting of the World Economic Forum or a conference of the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) project or at least having some formal links with these forums. The World Economic Forum is attended by the types of people PopPov strives to reach. NTA addresses issues very similar to those in one of the key PopPov research questions.

Other Dissemination Activities

Many researchers and advocates in the population and development field have very little, if any, awareness of PopPov. The PopPov website (poppov.org) currently focuses on researchers in the network; it is difficult to find some important material (e.g., briefs), and some of the material on it is not up to date. The briefs prepared for PopPov are more appropriate for researchers than for policymakers. To increase awareness of the PopPov program and to improve dissemination of its research findings, we recommend the following:

- Mention PopPov more prominently on the PRB website, which is much more widely visited than the PopPov site.
- Consider working with a firm experienced in strategic communication about population and development issues to identify audiences and outreach opportunities. PRB reaches a certain audience but does not necessarily reach all audiences that would benefit from knowing about PopPov research.
- Increase outreach to the economic development community, e.g., by getting postings about PopPov research and activities on blogs by economists on development issues.
- Revamp the PopPov website to make it up to date and more appropriate for potentially interested parties (including nonresearchers) who are not involved in the network, including policymakers and the media. The goal should be that the PopPov website is where policymakers, researchers, and other interested parties want to go to learn the latest scientifically sound findings about the relationships of population dynamics and RH with economic development, poverty, and inequality.
- Make the briefs more appropriate for policy audiences; it would help to call them “policy briefs” rather than “research briefs.” Also, have the key people who conducted the research actively participate in the preparation of policy briefs about that research and list them

as coauthors of the briefs (because one of the goals of PopPov was to involve well-known, senior researchers or developing-country researchers whose names would open doors).

- As appropriate, translate briefs into other languages (e.g., into French for dissemination to researchers, policymakers, and donors in Francophone Africa and in France).
- Be more proactive about the dissemination of the briefs, e.g., by having display copies at relevant conferences and events.
- Look for opportunities to present PopPov research at conferences, such as Women Deliver, that are attended by policymakers, advocates, and the press.
- Be more proactive in letting people know about the network, its research and findings, and the opportunities for people who are not part of the network to present at the annual conferences (if the conferences are continued).

PopPov has made considerable contributions that deserve attention from a much wider group of researchers, advocates, and policymakers than it is currently reaching. Careful syntheses of what has been learned from technically sound existing research (both that funded by PopPov and that not done for PopPov), with particular attention to findings with policy implications and written in a way that is accessible to policymakers, would be a useful contribution that PopPov could support. If appropriately written, such pieces could have the potential to reach audiences that are not swayed by materials from advocacy groups that are associated with a particular point of view.

Acknowledgments

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The opinions expressed are ours and do not necessarily reflect the views of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Abbreviations

ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
AERC	African Economic Research Consortium
AFD	l'Agence Française de Développement
AFIDEP	African Institute for Development Policy
AI	Amnesty International
AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
APHRC	African Population and Health Research Center
BREAD	Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development
CA	communications analyst
CCT	conditional cash transfer
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CGD	Center for Global Development
CV	curriculum vitae
DD	demographic dividend
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DOE	Department of Education
DSS	demographic surveillance system
ECONPOP	Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics
EDPP	Evaluation Database of PopPov Papers
EDW	Economic Demography Workshop
EQ	evaluation question
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council

FP	family planning
GDP	gross domestic product
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IF	impact factor
IFORD	l'Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IIE	Institute of International Education
IRD	l'Institut de recherche pour le développement
IUSSP	International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
n.a.	not applicable
NBER	National Bureau of Economic Research
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIA	National Institute on Aging
NICHD	Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
NIH	National Institutes of Health
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSF	National Science Foundation
NTA	National Transfer Accounts
NWO	Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, or Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research
OLS	ordinary least squares
OPRH	Office of Population and Reproductive Health
PAA	Population Association of America
PI	principal investigator
PopDev	Population, Reproductive Health and Economic Development
PopPov	Population and Poverty Research Initiative
PRAT	Policy Relevance Assessment Tool
PRB	Population Reference Bureau
RCN	Research Council of Norway

RCT	randomized controlled trial
RFP	request for proposals
RH	reproductive health
RIPS	Regional Institute of Population Studies
RQ	research question
RWJF	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SOPP	state of PopPov (the Population and Poverty Research Initiative)
SSA	sub-Saharan Africa
T32	institutional training program
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WBCA	Wits-Brown-Colorado–African Population and Health Research Center

Introduction

Since 2005, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, with collaboration and co-funding from research councils in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and Norway and from the World Bank, has invested in a portfolio of social science research on the relationship between population dynamics and micro- and macroeconomic outcomes. The portfolio is known as the Population and Poverty Research Initiative (PopPov), and its geographic focus is on sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The core aim of the program is to build (or, in some cases, rebuild) and advance the field of economic demography, orienting the work toward research that would be relevant for policy and would increase recognition by economic policymakers of the value of lowering the rate of population growth and investing in family planning (FP). The program also aims to strengthen the capacity of researchers in SSA. The PopPov initiative tries to achieve these aims through four main components: (1) grants to support research on PopPov core topics of interest (described in Section II), (2) fellowships to support graduate students preparing their doctoral dissertations, (3) conferences and workshops to support the development of networking opportunities, and (4) other dissemination activities. As of December 2013, PopPov has funded 56 doctoral fellows and (together with its partners) has supported 61 research projects;¹ in addition, seven international conferences and additional workshops have been held, and there have been several other dissemination activities. The Population Reference Bureau (PRB) and the Center for Global Development (CGD) have been the secretariats for PopPov. Since 2008, the Institute of International Education (IIE) has administered the fellowship program.

In November 2012, the foundation issued a request for proposals (RFP) for an evaluation of PopPov, to help guide the foundation's decisions about both the substance and means of future investments in it. The RAND Corporation was selected to conduct the evaluation. This report is directed at the four key questions posed in the RFP for the evaluation:

- Evaluation question (EQ) 1. To what extent did PopPov reengage or strengthen the field of economic demography?
- EQ.2. What contribution has PopPov research made to the evidence base regarding relationships between demographic change or behavior and economic outcomes?
- EQ.3. How and to what extent did the PopPov investments yield policy-relevant and influential research?

¹ This number does not include early grants made directly by the Hewlett Foundation to such organizations as African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). As noted in Section II.B.1.e, these are outside the scope of this evaluation. There are currently no plans to fund additional research projects or fellowships.

- EQ.4. How did the design of the PopPov program affect its ability to build the field, expand the evidence base, and inform policies and practices? How did the implementation of the PopPov program contribute or pose challenges to achieving these outcomes?

The document is organized as follows. In Section II, we provide an overview of PopPov, its evolution, and features. Section III describes the approach, including data and methods, we have used to evaluate the PopPov initiative. Section IV presents the findings for each of the four questions posed above. Finally, in Section V, we conclude by drawing lessons and making recommendations to guide future foundation investments.

History and Overview of PopPov

Because there was no comprehensive repository of PopPov’s history, we begin our report with a background of the evolution of the PopPov initiative and summarize its main components: the research program, dissertation fellowships, conferences and workshops, and dissemination activities. The information in this section comes from a variety of sources—from foundation, co-funder, and PRB records; progress and final reports submitted by grantees; information on the PopPov website and in the PRB Mendeley database;¹ the recent report on the state of PopPov (SOPP) (Lee and Belohlav, 2013); and communications we have had with people currently or formerly with partner organizations. At the end of Section II, we also briefly describe previous assessments of PopPov and how the present evaluation differs from these evaluations.

II.A. Historical Background

After Sara Seims joined the Hewlett Foundation in 2003 as the new director of the foundation’s Population Program, a new strategy was prepared for the program. The starting premise of the strategy was that there were key knowledge gaps in the evidence base about the effects of demographic change on economic outcomes at both the micro and macro levels. The foundation faced the task of deciding how to devise a strategy to address this situation. It decided to try to fill those gaps by building or rebuilding the field of economic demography,² both by commissioning high-quality research by what Seims and program officer Tamara Fox considered to be “the best and the brightest” economists and by investing in the next generation of researchers studying these issues. Seims and Fox felt that development economists were not sufficiently considering the effects of population factors in their research. They believed that the decisionmakers holding the power to change and implement population policies were ministers of finance, who typically are economists by training. Foundation officials therefore felt that these decisionmakers were most likely to be convinced by evidence on population issues that came from respected economist researchers. The foundation officials recognized that, by choosing this path of supporting high-level economists, the results would likely not immediately be in a form that would have policy influence but would have to be translated into language more familiar to policymakers; this thinking led to the inclusion of dissemination activities as a main component of the initiative.

¹ Mendeley is software that provides reference management tools.

² The definition of this term is discussed at the beginning of Section IV.

In 2004, the Hewlett Foundation made a grant to CGD

to develop a consensus statement among high-level experts about the substantive and methodological priorities for research on the dynamic relationship between demographic and economic change in sub-Saharan Africa, at the macro- and household (micro-) levels.³ (CGD, 2006, p. 1)

CGD was selected because it was a highly respected organization in the economic development community and because its director (Nancy Birdsall) and many of its staff were economists who were knowledgeable about population and reproductive health (RH) issues. CGD formed and convened the Population and Development Working Group to develop

a research agenda to investigate the relationship between reproductive health and population dynamics, and key features at household, community and national levels, . . . with a special focus on the type of research that would be useful to economics and health sector policymaking by national governments and donor agencies working in sub-Saharan Africa. (CGD, 2005b, p. 2)

Experts from a variety of fields “were convened between February and June 2005, with the support and interest of The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and the World Bank” (CGD, 2005b, p. 2). DFID, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated informally in working-group activities. There was a follow-up meeting co-hosted by the UK and French governments the following year.

The working group consisted of 21 members. Seven of these were with the World Bank (mostly the regional offices), seven from universities, and seven from the other institutions (three from CGD, two from the Population Council, and one each from the African Population and Health Research Center [APHRC] and the International Center for Research on Women). The members were largely, but not exclusively, economists; few had any direct policy experience. The working group was chaired by Nancy Birdsall of CGD. Tamara Fox of the Hewlett Foundation and Judith Helzner, of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, participated as invited guests. (Three of the university members of the working group—David Canning of Harvard, Andrew Foster of Brown, and T. Paul Schultz of Yale—have remained very involved with PopPov, as have Alex Ezeh [of APHRC] and Cynthia Lloyd [then at the Population Council].⁴) Informed by background papers and deliberations during three meetings, the working group prepared a consensus report, *Population Dynamics and Economic Development: Elements of a Research Agenda*, issued in July 2005 (CGD, 2005b).

The working group identified four research questions (RQs) on which its members felt empirical research would be useful for the medium-term policy agenda (CGD, 2005b, p. 2):

³ We understand *macro* to indicate economic effects at the country level, such as on gross domestic product (GDP), and *micro* as being made up of variables at the household level, such as savings, income, or expenditures. However, these terms may hold different meaning for policymakers and non-economist researchers, thereby creating potential confusion of what variables ought to be studied and whether those studied are perceived as meaningful by policymakers.

⁴ The others of the 21 have had very little involvement since these original meetings, as evidenced by the fact that none has done research for PopPov or attended a PopPov conference.

- RQ.1. Given the projected trends in fertility and mortality changes, what are their implications for economic growth and income distribution and the incidence of poverty?
- RQ.2. How does investment in RH affect economic conditions at the household level, including the productivity, labor force participation, and savings behavior of women, children, and households?
- RQ.3. How do different types of investments in RH affect the health of women and children?
- RQ.4. How does the type and organization of services affect their effectiveness, including the ability to reach poor and vulnerable populations?

These became the research questions that PopPov has sought to address.⁵ We note that the questions are relatively broad, which would enable attracting a large number of researchers, and thereby help build the field. This is in contrast to narrower questions that one could envision as a starting point of the initiative, such as “how much money should Nigeria invest in condom promotion to increase GDP growth by 1 percentage point?” In Section IV.B.1, we document the extent to which PopPov research has investigated each of these four research questions.

The CGD working group described the investments in data collection and the research strategies that it felt promised to lead to more-definitive and generalizable findings regarding the research questions than had been possible in the past. The working group identified four priorities for data collection:

- Where possible, *both* demographic and economic information should be collected as part of cross-sectional household data.⁶
- *Panel data* (including demographic, health, fertility histories, education, labor market, migration and household structure variables) should be collected in a site in SSA.
- Data sets made up of *subnational data* should be developed, at least for several relatively large countries in which there is substantial internal variation. Ideally, these data would include information about program exposure and program characteristics, population characteristics and demographic behavior, and economic conditions (labor force participation rates by sector, savings rates, income per capita, wage rates, by gender and age, and others).

⁵ The working-group document has been taken very seriously by PRB in guiding PopPov. Rachel Nugent, who was the program director of PopPov at PRB and then at CGD, commented that the document’s

objectives are part of the original RFPs, and the Theory of Change for the original PRB and later CGD PopPov grants were written around the questions put forth in the CGD report. Many of the people involved in the original CGD working group were involved in the Network as advisors and grantees. (email sent to the authors June 3, 2013)

Marlene Lee, the current program director for PopPov at PRB, mentioned that, when she began preparing the SOPP report, she initially thought that some of the research was out of scope, but then she checked the working-group report and saw a mention of the specific topic or related research question (e.g., human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] programs, migration).

⁶ In particular, the working group suggested that the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHSs) supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) could work toward inclusion of economic variables and that the Living Standards Measurement Studies supported by the World Bank could refine their collection of health and health-service use information.

- Opportunities should be sought to use *random assignment evaluation* methods (randomized controlled trials [RCTs]) because they are considered to represent the current gold standard.

These priorities illustrate the decision made by PopPov to stress rigorous analyses to seek to answer (investigator-initiated) research questions; they constitute a wish list of ideal data to evaluate questions of economic demography, as evidenced, for example, by the call for data derived from RCTs.

Also with Hewlett Foundation funding, in May 2005, CGD conducted the Policy Roundtable on Economic Development and Population Dynamics, a discussion with key experts, with the following goals:

- Consult with leading policymakers about how information about the micro- and macro-economic impacts of demographic change might affect design of economic development strategies.
- Identify key knowledge gaps in this area that impede informed economic policymaking at the national level.
- Ensure policy relevance of a research agenda proposed by a working group of economists, demographers, and other social scientists.

Forty-eight experts—researchers, representatives of foundations, and high-level policymakers—participated in the round table, including ten members of the CGD working group described earlier. (See CGD, 2005a, for a description of the event, the transcript, and the final research agenda.) Some of the main conclusions of the event were as follows:

- Both from an academic and from a policy perspective, studying the relationship between RH and economic outcomes at the household, community, region, and national levels represents an important area of inquiry.
- Timely dissemination of new evidence to policymakers needs to be a priority.
- Finance ministers are a key audience for this type of research.

Furthermore, the discussion called for an increased focus on linkages between macro- and micro-level research. The round table influenced the deliberations of the working group and had an impact on the shaping of PopPov; for example, Sara Seims and Tamara Fox, both then at the Hewlett Foundation, commented that the round table helped shaped their thinking about the types of evidence needed to convince policymakers, such as high-caliber research from highly regarded international and local researchers.

In 2005, the Hewlett Foundation made a grant to the George Washington University Center for Global Health's program of research on population and poverty to support Tom Merrick advising the Hewlett Foundation Population Program staff on development of a research program about links between population, economic growth, and poverty reduction; liaison with World Bank units working with the foundation on these topics; and the launching of the Population, Reproductive Health, and Economic Development Dissertation Fellowship program. In August 2006, the grant was transferred to PRB.

II.B. Main Components of PopPov

We now discuss motivations for and implementation of the main components of PopPov: research grants,⁷ doctoral fellowships, conferences, and dissemination activities.

II.B.1. The PopPov Research Grant Program

II.B.1.a. Research Grants Made by PRB

In October 2005, the Hewlett Foundation made a grant to PRB to select and fund “research teams at internationally recognized universities to study the intersection of population, family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) with economic development” (PRB, 2008); this became known as the Population and Poverty Research Initiative, or PopPov. The stated goal of the program was “to improve the understanding of and policy attention to how population affects economic well-being in Africa” (PRB, 2008). PRB was selected as the secretariat for PopPov in part because its president at the time, William P. Butz, and the person there who would manage the PopPov program, Rachel Nugent, were economists and because of PRB’s experience in communicating about population data and research.⁸

Initially, PRB held two funding competitions—the first, by invitation only, to create teams of U.S.-based researchers, and the second, an open competition, to create Global Teams that included Africa-based researchers. The calls for proposals requested proposals to “increase knowledge about how population and reproductive health impact economic development”;⁹ each team was “expected to have at least one economist” (Hewlett Foundation and PRB, 2006b). Global teams were required to include “senior researchers at a recognized research institution in a developing country” (Hewlett Foundation and PRB, 2006a). The RFP did not emphasize the types of data methods of analysis recommended in the CGD working-group report, mentioned in Section II.A. Selection criteria used for these first two competitions (with predetermined weighting in parentheses) were relevance to program priorities (25 percent), scientific merit (25 percent), relevance to African population issues (20 percent), quality of past research (15 percent), and potential for clear and relevant policy applications (15 percent). The competition for the U.S. teams was by invitation to “13 highly ranked academic institutions with strong track records on research of relevance to the goals of the Hewlett/PRB research program” (PRB, 2008), reflecting the focus on research rigor discussed above. Eight proposals were received for the U.S. competition; they were peer-reviewed, and, in January 2007, two were funded. One of the two U.S.-based projects, to a team at Duke University, proposed to analyze data from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mexico, and South Africa to “measure the effects of investments in family planning and reproductive health services on a broad array of indicators of health and well-being of women, their children, and their families” (Frankenberg and Thomas, 2009). The other, to a team at Brown University, examined Bangladesh and India

⁷ More information about the research grants (topics, disciplines, data and methods, funders) is provided in Section IV.B.

⁸ In March 2007, Rachel Nugent left PRB for CGD, but she continued to direct the research and fellowship program. Initially, PRB still provided staff support and administered the grants; later, after getting a grant specifically for PopPov, CGD provided staff support but PRB continued to administer the grants. Nugent left CGD in 2011, and the secretariat then returned to PRB, with James Gribble, a demographer who was vice president of International Programs at PRB, managing the program, followed by Marlene Lee, who is currently program director for Academic Research and Relations in the Domestic Programs Division at PRB; she is a development sociologist and demographer.

⁹ The RFP listed eight examples of research questions; seven of them were on the effects of demographic variables on economic variables. (The other question was on intergenerational transfers.)

to integrate micro and macro perspectives “to increase the understanding of how investments in health and fertility decline contribute to economic growth” (Weil, 2010). Hence, there was relatively little on SSA, despite the regional focus stated in the CGD working-group report and emphasis on SSA in the selection criteria. In contrast, the four global projects, for which awards were made in December 2007 (out of 16 full proposals received), were all on SSA. They were to research teams at Harvard University (for research on Zambia); at Harvard University and the University of Ghana (for research on Ghana); at the University of California, Berkeley (for research on Tanzania); and at the University of Michigan and the University of Cape Town (for research on South Africa).

II.B.1.b. Grant to the World Bank

The Hewlett Foundation viewed economists at the World Bank as a key target audience for research showing (presumably) that population and RH can affect poverty and economic outcomes, and its officials felt that World Bank decisionmakers would be most convinced by research done by economists at the World Bank and that ministers of finance would listen to economists at the World Bank. Sara Seims and Tamara Fox, both then at the Hewlett Foundation, and Ruth Levine (then at CGD) met with Elizabeth King, who was, at the time, the head of the Human Development unit of the Development Economics Vice Presidency, the research arm of the World Bank, to discuss the possibility of World Bank researchers doing research for PopPov. This led to a request from the Hewlett Foundation that the World Bank submit a proposal for research that had both micro- and macroeconomic aspects; such a proposal was submitted and was funded in December 2005. The foundation gave funding of \$1.5 million to the World Bank, which matched this with an equal amount of its own funds. The World Bank had an internal competition for these funds, resulting in 15 projects.

II.B.1.c. European Partners

European development economists had not been part of the formative CGD deliberations, but Hewlett staff thought that European partners could improve the visibility of the effort. Hewlett staff met with staff of the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to tell them about PopPov, and ESRC quickly agreed to become involved with the initiative; the foundation’s grant to ESRC was made in December 2006. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, or NWO) WOTRO Science for Global Development (NWO-WOTRO) joined as a partner in September 2007.¹⁰ From France, l’Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD) and l’Agence Française de Développement (AFD) joined as PopPov partners in November 2008. (AFD, which is the French equivalent of USAID, is the funder; IRD is the implementer.) Hewlett staff also felt that it would be a good idea to have a Scandinavian partner, and the Research Council of Norway (RCN) joined as a PopPov partner in March 2009; this was the first time RCN had co-funded with a U.S. institution. Each of these European partner organizations received funds from the Hewlett Foundation and matched these with a near-equal amount of its own funds.¹¹ Efforts were also made to get the European Union involved, but these efforts

¹⁰ NWO is the Netherlands organization for scientific research. WOTRO is a division of NWO that funds interdisciplinary research on global issues, with a focus on poverty and sustainable development via partnerships of Dutch researchers with developing-country counterparts.

¹¹ In the Norwegian case, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) provides 37.5 percent of the funds, RCN 12.5 percent, and the Hewlett Foundation 50 percent.

did not bear fruit during Tamara Fox's time at Hewlett and were not pursued further after she left the foundation.

Each of the European partners has its own name for its part of PopPov (Table II.1). Each has focused on researchers in its own country (in collaboration with those in the developing country being studied), though the French fund researchers in any EU member country. In all, the joint Hewlett/ESRC Research Scheme on Economic Development and Population/Reproductive Health has supported four research projects; PopDev has supported three; DEMTRENDR has supported seven projects (four on health or RH and three on migration); and ECONPOP has supported six research projects. Several of these projects have been supported as part of the "joint call," which is described in the next subsection. Each European partner has used an international advisory committee to review proposals. More information about the research supported by each European donor is in the next section and in Section IV of this report.

Table II.1
European Partners' Names for Their PopPov Programs

Funder	Name for PopPov Program
ESRC (UK)	Joint Hewlett/ESRC Research Scheme on Economic Development and Population/Reproductive Health
NWO-WOTRO (Netherlands)	PopDev
AFD and IRD (France)	DEMTRENDR
RCN (Norway)	ECONPOP

NOTE: PopDev = Population, Reproductive Health and Economic Development. ECONPOP = Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics.

II.B.1.d. The Joint Call for Proposals, 2012

For the first several years of PopPov, PRB and each of the European partners had its own call for proposals. The 2012 the call for proposals was a joint call, meaning that PRB and three of the European donors developed a common call. (The French were not involved because they had already expended their PopPov resources. Part of the other European partners' motivation for the joint call was that the calls they already had made did not result in the allocation of all funds earmarked for the program.¹²) There were also other changes that reflect how the initiative evolved over time. For example, in response to gaps identified in a 2010 review of PopPov by Cynthia Lloyd and Tom Merrick (described in Section II.C), the joint call requested research on (1) the impact of RH on women's economic empowerment, particularly as measured by economic outcomes at the household and individual levels, and (2) relationships between FP and RH (including population policies and dynamics) and macroeconomic outcomes in countries. Hence, the topics were somewhat broader than the four research questions listed earlier. The joint call stipulated that the research "should concern a collaborative initiative of researchers from one or more of the participating countries (the Netherlands, UK, Norway, USA) with researchers from developing countries, with priority given to sub-Saharan

¹² The number of submissions for initial rounds varied dramatically across the European partners. WOTRO received six proposals in response to its initial call, whereas AFD and IRD received 65.

Africa (SSA),” and it stated that “[g]rants will be provided for an integrated interdisciplinary programme of work” (ESRC et al., 2011); there was no particular emphasis on economics, as there had been in some other PopPov RFPs. The development of the joint call, which was coordinated by PRB, entailed many discussions about language and stipulations because each partner had to abide by the rules and regulations of its own organization. There were international phone calls, reviews by an international panel, and a meeting in London to formulate the call. The result was a 22-page document describing the joint call (ESRC et al., 2011). For proposals responding to the joint call, the lead researcher had to be from one of the partner countries (the Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, or United States) or from SSA. In all, 31 eligible proposals were submitted; ten of these were invited to submit a revised proposal. Under the joint call, each research team that was invited to submit a revised proposal was required to hold a meeting with stakeholders in the country to be studied; funds were provided to cover travel and other costs of doing so.¹³ Each partner recommended individuals for the team of reviewers that assessed proposals submitted to the joint call; some of the reviewers had social-sector and policy expertise, which was a departure from previous practice for some of the partners. Applications were evaluated according to (1) scientific quality, (2) relevance for development (i.e., relevance for the topic of the current call, likelihood of providing a meaningful contribution, potential impact on policy and practice), and (3) quality of the collaboration. Each of these three criteria was considered equally important, but it was noted that, in case of similar mean scores for all three criteria, the level of excellence for scientific quality was to be used as the distinguishing criterion (ESRC et al., 2011). Six proposals were funded: one by WOTRO, one by RCN, two by ESRC (the second partially funded from other ESRC monies), and two by PRB. Four of the projects are on SSA; one is on Bangladesh; and one is on India. Two multilateral bonuses of €100,000 each were offered for collaborations that featured a consortium of researchers from two partner countries and a developing-country institution, but the only approved proposal that featured such a collaboration did not request the bonus.

II.B.1.e. Other Grants

In addition to the grants just mentioned, the Hewlett Foundation made direct grants to a number of institutions. Direct grants were made for research to teams at Yale (led by T. Paul Schultz) and at Harvard (led by David Canning and David Bloom); that research is covered in this report. Sara Seims of the Hewlett Foundation said that these grants were made directly because the “Canning et al. and Schultz work was exactly in the sweet spot of PopPov and thus we wanted to get those grants going quickly,” noting, “we knew that we wanted to support the work of Canning et al. and Schultz and didn’t need a competitive process to do this” (personal communication, November 29, 2013). Direct grants were also made, for similar reasons, to CGD (for components other than those discussed above), AERC, APHRC, the Brookings Institution, Duke University (to support the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development [BREAD] network), Equilibres et Populations, the Futures Group, IDS, and the International Health Economics Association. Per the recommendation of the Hewlett Foundation, these other grants (many of which supported meetings and workshops) are not covered in this evaluation.

¹³ The meeting with stakeholders was required by WOTRO in its earlier calls. The payments for stakeholder workshops were handled by each council.

II.B.2. PopPov Dissertation Fellowships for Doctoral Students

We discussed earlier that the grant program was conceived out of a conviction that, in order to sway policymakers, academically rigorous research by leading economists was necessary. We also noted that another aim of the PopPov initiative was to build the field of economic demography—a goal that could only partly be achieved through the grant program because that focused its resources, at least initially, largely on established researchers. In order to address the aim of field-building more fully, in late 2005, the Hewlett/PRB dissertation fellowship program was created, with the goal of increasing the skills of the next generation of researchers to (1) do research on topics at the intersection of population, FP, and RH with economic development and (2) communicate effectively to policy audiences. The second part of this program aimed directly at the goal of *dissemination* of the PopPov-created research findings by training junior researchers to translate their findings in a way that is understandable to policymakers.

PRB was the initial implementing institution for the fellowship program.¹⁴ The program was publicly announced in January 2006 and was widely advertised through emails to researchers in PRB databases and announcements through association newsletters and websites. The first cohort of fellows was chosen in May 2006. Fellowships were initially available only to students studying at a university in the United States or Canada; students studying at universities in SSA were not eligible, in part because the Hewlett Foundation had other grant programs to build capacity in SSA and because tax issues complicated sending money to SSA. In late 2007, the administration of the fellowship program moved to IIE. This occurred because the Hewlett Foundation wanted to expand the program to students at universities in SSA to increase field-building, and PRB could not handle the international fund transfer. The opening of the program to candidates in SSA greatly increased the number of applications. For example, in 2008, 40 applications were received from SSA (and 29 from the United States). (See Table II.2.)

From the inception of the program through 2013, 365 applications have been received and 56 fellows have been selected.¹⁵ Of the funded fellows, eight have been students at universities in SSA, one at a university in Canada,¹⁶ and the rest at universities in the United States. Fellows could be citizens of any country. For example, of the 46 fellows funded by IIE since 2008, only 13 have been U.S. citizens. Four of the fellows studying in the United States or Canada are nationals of a country in SSA.

Table II.2 shows the number of applications received each year, the total number of fellows selected, and the number of these who were studying at a university in SSA. In the most recent round (2013), fewer applications (25) were eligible for review—eight from students studying in SSA, one from a student studying in Canada, and 16 from students studying in the United States. Nancy Scally of IIE said that, although the number of applications received this year was lower, she felt that the overall quality was higher. This year, 2013, is the last year that doctoral fellowships will be funded under the current Hewlett Foundation grant to IIE. As of August 2013, 36 of the fellows are known to have completed their Ph.D.'s, 15 are still in

¹⁴ In March 2007, Rachel Nugent left PRB for CGD, but she continued to direct the fellowship program on a consultancy basis.

¹⁵ The most recent cohort, of seven fellows, was selected in early June 2013 and began receiving funding in mid-August.

¹⁶ There have been very few applications from students studying in Canada.

Table II.2
Population, Reproductive Health and Economic Development Dissertation
Fellowship Program: Number of Applicants and Number Funded, by Year

Year	Number of Applications Received	Total Number Funded	Number of These Studying in SSA
2006	34	4	Not eligible
2007	32	6	Not eligible
2008	69	8	4
2009	47	8	2
2010	51	7	0
2011	64	9	1
2012	43	7	1
2013	25	7	0
Total	365	56	8

NOTE: In 2006 and 2007, the fellowship program was administered by PRB. Since 2008, it has been administered by IIE.

progress, and one dropped out of the program; there are no recorded outcomes for the remaining four.

To be eligible for a PopPov doctoral fellowship, an applicant must be in the research phase of his or her doctoral program, i.e., he or she must have completed all course work. The fellow receives funding each semester after he or she sends a progress report and a financial report. Currently, the maximum total funding is \$20,000 per year, with support for up to two years while still enrolled;¹⁷ no extensions or renewals are possible. The fellow can use the funds as he or she wishes—for travel, tuition, or living expenses. There is no restriction on whether the fellow can receive other funding. If a fellow has a paper or poster accepted for presentation at a conference (e.g., Population Association of America [PAA], International Union for the Scientific Study of Population [IUSSP]), additional funds have been provided for the fellow to attend.

Each proposal for a fellowship is required to include a statement of intent, a literature review, a two-page personal essay, curriculum vitae (CV), and letters of recommendation. IIE does the first screening of fellowship applications to make sure the applicants are eligible. The applications are then reviewed. In recent rounds, each application has been reviewed by two reviewers. Hewlett staff have made some suggestions of reviewers but have not been involved in the selection process. Feedback from the reviewers has been provided to some of the unsuccessful applicants.

In 2008 and 2009, there were separate calls and separate reviews for U.S.-based and Africa-based candidates; the monetary awards differed as well, to reflect the price differences between African and U.S. universities. In 2008, four (of the eight) fellowships were awarded to students studying in SSA; in 2009, two (of eight) were. The reviewers judged the applications from SSA to be academically less rigorous than those from the United States and Canada.

¹⁷ A few fellows received their doctorates before the two years were up, freeing up some of the funds allotted for them.

After the 2009 competition, it was decided (by Tamara Fox of the Hewlett Foundation and the selection committee) to combine the call for applications into one call for all students and to select the strongest applications overall, regardless of where the student matriculates. This can be interpreted as a shift from field-building in SSA in particular toward a stronger focus on research rigor. As can be seen in Table II.2, as a result of this procedural change, fewer awards to doctoral students at universities in SSA have been made since then (none in 2010, one each in 2011 and 2012, and none in 2013).

Most of the fellows have attended the annual PopPov conferences (described below), one of the crucial pillars in the effort of field-building, networking, and dissemination of the initiative. At the early conferences, the fellows presented their work in progress to each other the day before the formal conference began; this helped to foster a sense of community among the fellows, facilitated interaction with senior researchers who would attend these workshops, and provided feedback on the fellows' research. In addition, preconference workshops have been offered for the fellows. A workshop on grant-writing was offered to fellows and to selected young African scholars before the PopPov annual conference in Arusha, Tanzania, in December 2007. (Fellows were also sponsored to attend the Union for African Population Studies annual meeting in Arusha after the PopPov conference.) A grant-writing workshop was also offered before the third annual PopPov conference in Dublin, Ireland, in January 2009. These workshops furthered the aim of field-building by helping these junior researchers learn to compete for their own sources of funding for future research.

Through 2010, many of the Hewlett/PRB fellows participated in the PRB Policy Communication Workshop, which includes a two-week-long, hands-on summer component and is consistent with the dissemination aim of PopPov.¹⁸ After the fellowship program moved to IIE, new fellows no longer participated in the PRB Policy Communication Workshop as part of the Hewlett dissertation support, but a few have participated with other financial support. As an alternative, beginning in 2010, short workshops on communications and research methods were offered for fellows the day before the annual PopPov conference (and these preconference workshops were open to all conference attendees).

When IIE took over the administration of the fellowship program, the Hewlett/PRB fellows were not automatically invited to the conferences. At the suggestion of the Hewlett Foundation, they were all invited to and funded to attend the 2013 conference. The current plan for the next conference (to be held in Nairobi in January 2014) is that all current and former fellows will be invited to the conference. IIE fellows will be funded by IIE as long as IIE has sufficient funding; IIE currently budgets for 35. If a Hewlett/PRB fellow has an accepted paper or is asked to be a discussant, he or she will be funded.

In the fall of 2012, at the suggestion of Helena Choi, program officer at the Hewlett Foundation, there was a research-grant competition for alumni of the fellowship program, open to former fellows who had received their Ph.D.'s, for research projects that addressed the priorities of the PopPov program. This added grant mechanism can be interpreted as a further attempt of field-building in helping to keep former fellows in the field. The program announcement noted, "The ultimate goal of the project should be to contribute to the literature in the field through a written paper that will eventually be published in a peer-reviewed journal." (This

¹⁸ The PRB Policy Communication Program aims to bridge the gap between research findings and the policy development process. It includes a two-week program at PRB during the summer, a one- or two-day workshop in conjunction with the PAA annual meeting in the spring, and mentoring from PRB staff through the year. (See PRB, undated [b].)

is similar to young-investigator awards offered by the National Institutes of Health [NIH], to help junior researchers develop their research portfolios.) There was funding for three grants of \$50,000 each, awarded out of seven applications. All three recipients were scholars who had studied at U.S. universities; two of them are collaborating on their research, a relationship that began with their meeting at a PopPov conference.

There is a Facebook page for current and former fellows to enable them to keep in touch.

II.B.3. PopPov Conferences and Workshops

A major building block for the field-building and dissemination goals of the PopPov initiative is the annual international PopPov conference. To date, there have been seven conferences:

- London, November 2006
- Arusha, December 2007
- Dublin, January 2009
- Cape Town, January 2010
- Marseilles, January 2011
- Accra, January 2012
- Oslo, January 2013.

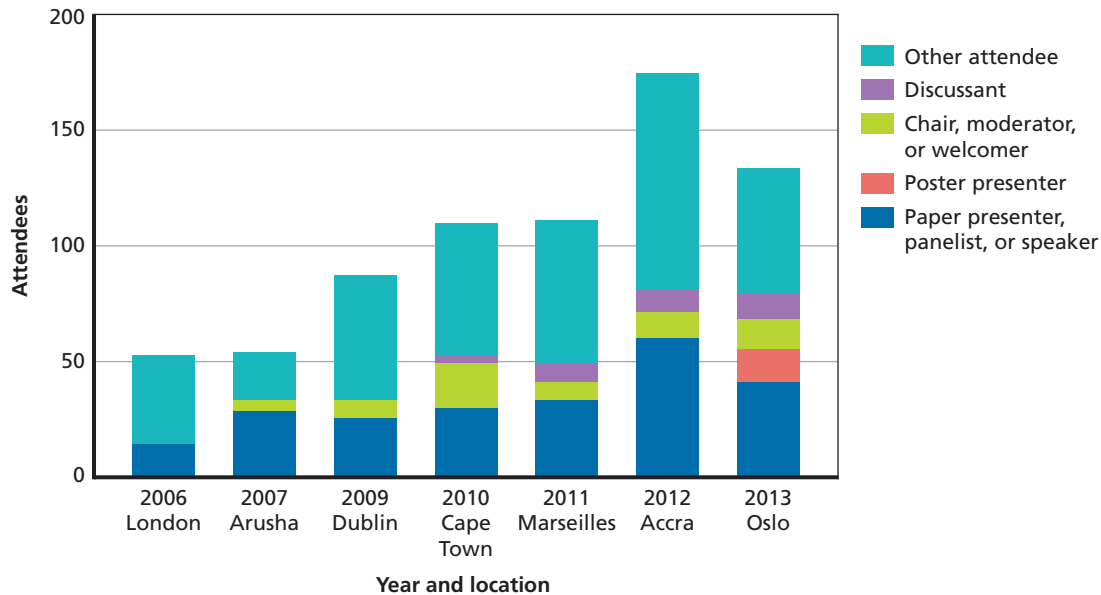
The first five conferences were organized by Rachel Nugent.¹⁹ James Gribble and Marlene Lee of PRB have organized the conferences since then. The local host selects the venues. The eighth conference will be held in Nairobi in January 2014; it is being organized by Marlene Lee.

The conferences have been successful in bringing together researchers, policymakers, and advocates interested in PopPov topics. Nearly 500 people have attended at least one PopPov annual conference. Figure II.1 shows the number of people who attended each conference, by their role in the conference. Total conference attendance increased over time until 2012, reaching 174 in Accra. Attendance was considerably lower (134) at the conference in Oslo, in January 2013. As can be seen in Figure II.1, the higher attendance in Accra than in Oslo was due to a greater number of people who attended the conference but were not on the program. (Because of a local newspaper article about the conference, there were 52 uninvited attendees at the Accra conference; these were journalists and graduate students from the University of Cape Coast who came for the keynote address by Fred Sai.) In Section IV.D.4, we examine how attendance varies by whether the person was a PopPov fellow or grantee or with a partner organization, by region of residence, and by discipline.

For the first two conferences (London in 2006 and Arusha in 2007), Tamara Fox of the Hewlett Foundation and Rachel Nugent decided on the presenters and other attendees; they included some of the established scholars who were invited to respond to the initial U.S. RFP, as well as other highly respected scholars in the field. By the time of the third conference, in January 2009, and subsequently, an advisory committee was formed for each conference, composed of some of the PopPov grantees and a few other advisers, such as Tom Merrick and Cheikh Mbacké; the advisory committee gave suggestions of people to invite. By the time of

¹⁹ As with the fellowship program, Rachel Nugent continued to organize the conferences after she moved from PRB to CGD in March 2007. She did so on a consultancy basis; the funds remained at PRB, and PRB continued to provide coordination support.

Figure II.1
Numbers of People Attending PopPov Annual Conferences, by Conference Role and Year



SOURCES: Information in conference programs and attendee lists.

RAND RR527-2.1

the fifth conference (Marseilles, in January 2011), a “diverse group of researchers [was selected] to comprise a scientific program steering committee” (PopPov Research Network, 2011), and the same procedure was used for subsequent conferences. Also, more-recent PopPov conferences were opened competitively to outside researchers, in contrast to previous conferences that were mostly for PopPov members presenting PopPov research.

The conferences feature presentations of papers on research that was supported by PopPov and some that was not. If two papers being considered for the program are rated equally, preference is given to the paper by a network member or a researcher from SSA. There has been considerable competition among those who are not part of the network. For example, for the 2012 Accra conference, there were 132 applications for non-PopPov papers, of which nine were accepted. There were 33 applications for PopPov papers, of which 14 were selected.²⁰

The conferences have been attended by people presenting papers, discussants, current (and some previous) fellows, and others recommended by donors or Hewlett Foundation–funded grantees. In 2012, Marlene Lee, with input from Jay Gribble and other members of the PRB team and the scientific program committee, organized the sessions; however, in 2013, the conference-program steering committee decided on themes and chose the papers and discussants for each session. Lee provided a list of former principal investigators (PIs) and “friends of PopPov,” though people organizing could choose a chair or discussant outside the list. Of the 12 discussants in Oslo, nine were PopPov grantees or fellows, one was a nongrantee who had attended four previous PopPov conferences and had reviewed proposals for PopPov, and the two others were Norwegians. In 2013, a poster session with nine posters was added; most of them focused on work just beginning, but some were on work further along that could be

²⁰ A couple of the accepted submissions did not end up on the conference agenda because of lack of funding or schedule conflicts.

presented as papers in case of last-minute cancellations. At the beginning of the poster session, each presenter gave a brief description of his or her research.

At the first conferences, it was too early to have results from the PopPov-funded projects; most of the research presented was work in progress or research not funded by PopPov. As part of PopPov's dissemination goal, some policymakers were invited to the early conferences to attend the research presentations and talk about their experiences in using research to guide policy. Policymakers have attended and participated in subsequent conferences as well. This is covered in more detail in Section IV.D.4.

The secretariat does not automatically fund conference attendance of all paper presenters because of the different funding streams and arrangements that various funders have. PRB grants require travel to the conference to be built into the project budget. RCN and WOTRO cover the costs for the researchers they support to attend the conferences; the researchers do not have to use money from their research grants for this. WOTRO has supported the attendance of two researchers per project (one from the Netherlands part of the team and one from the African team), even if the project does not have a paper on the program.²¹ Gerrie Tuitert, the director of PopDev for WOTRO, said that WOTRO considers attendance at the conferences "essential for networking, sharing and learning for the researchers within the PopPov-research field" (email to the authors, May 30, 2013). Similarly, RCN provides extra funding for one researcher from each project, preferably the principal investigator (PI), for attending the PopPov conferences, even if the project does not present any papers. In fact, it "strongly encourages" participation (Jan M. Haakonsen, email to the authors, October 18, 2013). The French fund only researchers who are presenting. To date, ESRC has not provided funds to support ESRC award holders attending the annual conference (but will ask potential applicants in any forthcoming joint call to include the cost of attendance at PopPov annual conferences in their application budgets if the PIs can make the case that participation in the conference would demonstrably improve the dissemination and impact of the research; ESRC rules would not normally fund attendance at a conference at which the researchers were not presenting their research). Typically, the PopPov secretariat funds the attendance of up to 30 individuals (presenters and discussants), and IIE funds up to 35 fellows. Recently, some remaining funds were used to assist some of the French-sponsored participants. Currently, the secretariat provides funds for attending the conference to members of the scientific program committee and any speaker, paper or poster presenter, panelist, or discussant who needs travel funds to participate.

As noted above, in recent years, the preconference workshops on communications and methods have been open to all conference attendees.²² In addition, several PopPov workshops have been held independently of the annual PopPov conferences. There was a workshop on use of longitudinal-data methods at Duke University in May 2008 that was attended by some PopPov grantees (in addition to some Duke students) and one on mixed methods, organized by two PopPov researchers (Angela Baschieri and Véronique Filippi), in London in November 2010 that was attended by around 25 people, including some of the grantees funded by the

²¹ WOTRO funded travel costs for four participants (two from the Netherlands and two from Africa) per project to attend the Accra conference.

²² In the past two years, the fellows have gotten together for lunch the day before the conference began, joined by a few senior researchers, but the lunch is at the same time as the partners' meeting, so individuals with the partner organizations have not been able to join the fellows.

European partners. The World Bank held workshops in April 2007 and April 2008 for internal and external audiences at which the World Bank's research teams reported on their progress.

II.B.4. Dissemination Activities

We have already mentioned several PopPov dissemination activities that were tied to other aspects of the initiative: Hewlett/PRB fellows' participation in the PRB Policy Communication Workshop, the preconference workshops on communications (open to all conference attendees), and the annual PopPov conferences, which disseminated the research to other researchers and to policymakers in attendance. In the sections that follow, we discuss other aspects of dissemination: the extent to which PopPov research has been presented at relevant conferences and other outreach by PopPov grantees (Section IV.A.3); publications of PopPov research (Section IV.B.5); how PRB and other partner organizations have helped disseminate findings from PopPov research (Section IV.C.4); and assessments of the conferences, the PopPov website, and dissemination products, such as research briefs (Sections IV.D.4 through IV.D.6).

II.C. Previous Evaluations of PopPov

There have been nine previous evaluations of aspects of PopPov on which we draw and build:

- Cynthia Lloyd and Tom Merrick, "Report on Progress of PopPov Research Program," June 20, 2010. Assesses the state of research regarding each of the four PopPov research questions for research supported by PopPov and for some research not supported by the initiative.
- Cynthia Lloyd and Tom Merrick, "Comments by Cynthia and Tom Following the Marseilles Meeting," 2011. An assessment of the 2011 PopPov conference in Marseilles.
- Barbara Seligman, "Advisory Memorandum on Options for Enhancing the Policy Relevance of Research Produced Under the Population/Poverty Initiative," September 26, 2011. The paper "(a) identifies target audiences for Pop/Pov research; (b) describes research qualities that enhance policy relevance; (c) suggests existing and potential venues and opportunities where Pop/Pov research may contribute to advancing policy change . . . ; and (d) provides a set of recommendations for how Pop/Pov research may be better-translated into policy."
- Cynthia Lloyd, "Feedback on the PopPov (Accra) Conference and Recommendations for the Future," February 13, 2012. An assessment of the 2012 PopPov conference in Accra.
- Barbara Seligman, "Final Deliverable 2, PopPov Consultancy," March 19, 2012. The paper "applies the Policy Relevance Assessment Tool (PRAT) to . . . projects commissioned under PopPov to identify the most policy relevant projects in the PopPov research portfolio. . . . It also identifies recommendations for how the policy value of these projects may be enhanced."
- Marlene Lee and Kate Belohlav, "Investigating Elements of a Population, Poverty, and Reproductive Health Research Agenda," draft, June 2013. This is the SOPP report; it summarizes the main findings of PopPov research.
- reports on online surveys that PRB conducted of the 2011, 2012, and 2013 PopPov conferences (PRB, 2011, 2012, 2013a).

The present evaluation differs from the previous ones in several ways:

- We have attempted to document a comprehensive history of PopPov and its elements from publicly available sources, as well as from other materials and expert interviews.
- We conducted an online survey among fellows and grantees about the output produced under PopPov to date (to complement the efforts of PRB's SOPP report) and opinions about aspects of the initiative; this differs from the expert-opinion type of evaluations that have preceded ours.
- We have conducted extensive interviews with people directly involved with PopPov, as well as key decisionmakers outside PopPov, to get opinions from inside, as well as outside, the PopPov network about some of the key issues and challenges with PopPov.
- We cover papers and presentations that were not yet complete when the previous evaluations were performed.

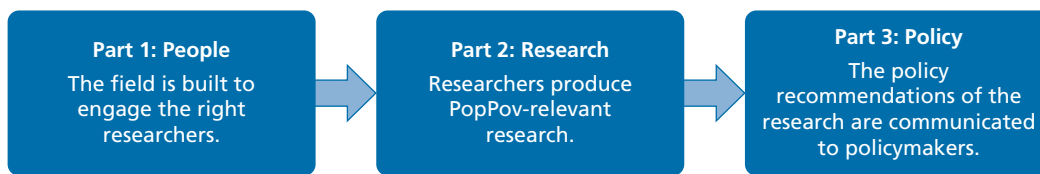
Methodological Approaches for the Evaluation

We now describe how we have addressed each of the four evaluation questions posed in the RFP:

- EQ.1. To what extent did PopPov reengage or strengthen the field of economic demography?
- EQ.2. What contribution has PopPov research made to the evidence base regarding relationships between demographic change or behavior and economic outcomes?
- EQ.3. How and to what extent did the PopPov investments yield policy-relevant and influential research?
- EQ.4. How did the design of the PopPov program affect its ability to build the field, expand the evidence base, and inform policies and practices? How did the implementation of the PopPov program contribute or pose challenges to achieving these outcomes?

For evaluating the goals of the initiative, we employ a supply-chain perspective that allows us to systematically look at PopPov outcomes and the links among them. Although arguably a simplification, the schematic we use is that of a supply chain running from people (researchers), to their research outputs, and finally to the impact of this research for policymakers; this is illustrated in Figure III.1. First, the right people have to be brought into the field, and the ones already in the field have to be induced to increase their activities on PopPov issues (EQ.1, the people part). Then, these people have to conduct high-quality research on the questions of interest to PopPov (EQ.2, the research outcomes part). The third question is whether this research resulted in implications for policy that found their way into the policy community (EQ.3, the policy part). The fourth main evaluation question in the RFP is then a critical look at the institutional parameters of this supply chain based on our findings from the first three questions, and whether it could have been organized more effectively or more efficiently. The framework used allows us to systematically investigate potential reasons for the failure

Figure III.1
Supply-Chain Perspective of Research for PopPov



RAND RR527-3.1

to achieve a certain goal. For example, if we find that there are relatively few policy-relevant findings, we can investigate the underlying reasons: Were not enough people motivated to do research in the area? Did the research not produce enough output? Did the research not have policy implications? Or was the research not effectively translated into policy-relevant advice?

We use both information already available and data we collected ourselves in the form of responses of key informants and survey respondents, as explained in the remainder of Section III, as well as our observations of presentations and interactions at the Accra and Oslo conferences.

III.A. Information from Records or Reports or Available Online

We have sought to obtain and evaluate a wide range of objective, measurable outcomes as the basis for our evaluation for each of the four evaluation questions we consider. For example, we have measured how many researchers participated in relevant conferences and how many papers were published on relevant topics in reputable journals as indicators of the number of researchers engaging in the field, with publications as our main measure of research output. We have drawn on foundation, co-funder, and PRB records; progress and final reports submitted by grantees; and information on the PopPov website (e.g., conference programs), in the PRB Mendeley database, in the SOPP report (Lee and Belohlav, 2013), and in previous evaluations of PopPov (listed earlier). Following the advice of the Hewlett Foundation, we restrict our attention to the projects covered by the SOPP report and do not cover some of the early projects funded directly by the foundation, which were mentioned in Section II.B.1.e.

To form a database with entries for each paper written with PopPov funding, we have combined information in the bibliography in Appendix C of the SOPP report with information about papers obtained in our survey (described in Section III.C), follow-up email correspondence with some respondents, some of the documents just mentioned, and our reviews of some of the papers. We call this the Evaluation Database of PopPov Papers (EDPP). The SOPP bibliography is supposed to be up to date through September 2012. EDPP will miss papers not reported in SOPP (including those since September 2012) by fellows and PIs of research grants who did not respond to our survey. SOPP lists 128 papers in its Appendix C. We learned about another 131 papers from our survey and subsequent email correspondence with several fellows. Nonetheless, it is possible that the 259 total is an underestimate because some grantees did not respond to our survey.¹

We have also created a database of everyone who has attended a PopPov conference, based on conference programs and attendance lists.

¹ In spot checking some of the papers mentioned in responses to our online survey, we noticed that some of them did not acknowledge PopPov funding. This may have been an oversight by the authors, but it is possible that some PIs may have described some papers as funded by PopPov when they actually were not, which in itself would lead to an overcount. We recommend that PopPov require that its support be acknowledged in all documents prepared for it.

III.B. Key-Informant Interviews

These semistructured, in-depth interviews, with individuals who are part of the network and those outside it, allowed us to talk with knowledgeable individuals at length to cover the same issues in more detail than we could ask in a survey format, as well as additional issues. (The survey is described in the next section.) We thought that it was important to hear from the researchers themselves about what they think worked well with the initiative to date and where they see areas for improvement, as well as to get the opinions of people outside the network about their awareness of it and the value of its output. Individuals interviewed included people with partner organizations, current and former fellows, PIs and co-PIs of research grants, researchers advising the initiative (e.g., by reviewing proposals), researchers neither receiving PopPov funding nor advising the initiative, policymakers, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) representatives; see Appendix A for a list of the nearly 100 people with whom we have communicated to collect information for this evaluation. Many of the in-person interviews took place at the PopPov conference in Oslo in January 2013, at the PAA meeting in New Orleans in April 2013, and in Washington, D.C., during April and May 2013. Other interviews were conducted by telephone, Skype, or email. The topics covered varied depending on the role of the interviewee. Both factual information and subjective impressions (e.g., of PopPov successes in different regards) were recorded. Note that, in order to preserve the confidentiality of the respondents we interviewed, we refer to them in most cases in this report by categorical labels (e.g., African senior researcher, junior economist, former fellow). Also for this reason, we use the male pronoun “he” when referring to anyone we interviewed.

III.C. Online Survey

We designed and administered an online survey to elicit the opinions of PopPov fellows and research grantees (both PIs and co-PIs) regarding all steps of the supply chain laid out above.² The development of the questionnaire was informed by the key-informant interviews just mentioned, which, for the most part, were conducted early in the project cycle.

Like the key-informant interviews, the survey gathered both objective and subjective information. The former included respondent characteristics and information about publications and presentations; the latter included opinions about how PopPov shaped one’s research or how effective the program was in various dimensions. Most of the questions had Likert-style responses, which can be easily summarized with frequency statistics.³

In June 2013, we sent introductory emails, with links to the online survey, to 48 PopPov doctoral fellows⁴ and 51 PIs of PopPov research projects. We were unable to find a valid email address for one of the fellows; to our knowledge, all of the other fellows and all of the PIs

² We used ClassApps’s SelectSurvey.NET software to design the questionnaire. RAND holds a site license for the software, so we had both technical and communication support in creating and deploying the survey. We created the survey in-house, piloted it internally to ensure functionality, and branded it with the RAND logo so that respondents could be sure of its authenticity.

³ Strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree. There was an option for “not applicable” where appropriate.

⁴ We did not send the survey to the seven fellows selected in June 2013 and to the one fellow who dropped out of the program.

received our emails inviting them to participate in the survey. We also contacted, with links to a shorter version of the questionnaire, all researchers listed as co-PIs in PRB records for whom we could find valid email addresses ($n = 74$).⁵ Co-PIs were included as respondents because they may have their own opinions about PopPov and the contributions of their projects. In two cases, at the request of the PI, a co-PI responded on behalf of his PI and did not fill out the co-PI survey; in four cases, we never found a valid email address for the co-PI. To encourage frank responses, respondents were guaranteed confidentiality. The fellows and project PIs received the same survey. It was divided into two parts. Part 1 collected information on the characteristics of the respondent (e.g., discipline, geographic location of residence) and of the project (e.g., geographic setting of the research) and on the papers and key presentations coming out of the fellowship or research project(s) (including types of data and methods used and types of outreach to disseminate the findings).⁶ The second, more subjective, part of the survey, administered to all respondents, was anonymous and collected information on the opinions of the respondent about the strengths and weaknesses of various aspects of the PopPov initiative. The co-PI survey was almost identical to Part 2 of the PI/fellow survey, except that it contained fewer objective questions about the project's research. Respondents who did not reply by the requested date were sent up to two email reminders. The questionnaires are available upon request.

Table III.1 shows response rates to Parts 1 and 2 of the survey, for fellows, PIs, and co-PIs for whom we had valid email addresses. The overall response rate to Part 1 of the survey was 65 percent. The response rate to Part 1 was considerably higher for fellows (83 percent) than for PIs of research grants (49 percent). For both of these groups, response rates are lower for Part 2 (68 percent for fellows, 39 percent for PIs) than for Part 1. This could be because responding to Part 2 entailed clicking on a separate link, and some respondents chose not to do that. Also, the fact that Part 2 was anonymous may have led some respondents to feel that there was less social pressure to respond. By the standards of online surveys, these response rates are fairly typical and perhaps even better than usual, but naturally they raise questions about selection bias, so results have to be treated with caution. The response rate for co-PIs (38 percent) is similar to that for PIs for Part 2. In this report, we do not report statistics on co-PI responses because, in general, co-PIs seemed less informed about PopPov than the other two groups, but we do note some of their interesting answers to the survey's free-response questions.

We have examined how response rates to Part 1 of the survey for PIs and fellows vary by key characteristics of the respondents; these are shown in Appendix B. For fellows, response rates are lower for the PRB fellows (50 percent) than for the IIE fellows, whose fellowships were more recent (82 percent). Response rates for the PIs of research grants are considerably above average for those who received funding from AFD, ESRC, or RCN and are well below average for those who received funding from NWO-WOTRO or the World Bank. No systematic differences are seen by discipline for either group or for PIs by region of institution or by the year the grant began.

⁵ We could not find valid email addresses for four co-PIs, even after we contacted the projects' PIs to ask for this information.

⁶ If a PI had more than one project, he or she was asked about each of them.

Table III.1
Response Rates to the Survey by Fellows,
Principal Investigators, and Co-Principal
Investigators Whom We Contacted, by Survey
Part

Respondent	n	Part 1	Part 2
Fellow ^a	47	39 (83%)	32 (68%)
PI ^b	51	25 (49%)	20 (39%)
Co-PI ^c	68	n.a.	26 (38%)
Total	166	64 (65% ^d)	78 (47%)

NOTE: n.a. = not applicable.

^a Excludes one fellow who dropped out of the program and one for whom we could not find a valid email address.

^b At the request of two of the PIs, their co-PIs responded on their behalf to Part 1 of the PI survey (and did not take the co-PI survey). Because it was anonymous, we do not know whether these two co-PIs responded to Part 2 of the PI survey.

^c We exclude from the denominator for the response rate for co-PIs the two co-PIs who responded to the PI survey and the four co-PIs for whom we could not find valid email addresses.

^d The denominator is the total number of fellows and PIs contacted (98).

Findings for the Evaluation Questions

We now discuss our findings for the four main evaluation questions listed at the beginning of Section III.

IV.A. Evaluation Question 1: To What Extent Did PopPov Reengage or Strengthen the Field of Economic Demography?

To find appropriate measures to evaluate the extent to which PopPov has improved relevant outcomes, we must define *economic demography* and *field*. Although *economic demography* is typically defined as economic research on demographic topics broadly defined (to include not only fertility but also health and mortality, migration, household formation, and aging) for any geographic setting,¹ here we use a narrower definition of economic research or research on the economic aspects of the four PopPov research questions listed in Section II.A as applied to developing countries. The first potential definition of *field* is related to that of a knowledge base: the advancement of a set of concepts, the creation of new vocabulary, the looking at link-ages among variables not typically considered together, and the creation of new frameworks. The second is in terms of the number of people and institutions studying these concepts: reinforcing the research directions of established researchers and attracting new researchers to the field; attention to the issues; resonance within the policy community about population, RH, and development; and representation of scholarship at professional meetings. A third and related definition is in terms of funding, i.e., money spent on research on the topics of interest. For our evaluation, we try to address all these definitions to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the field. More specifically, we address the following subquestions:

- EQ.1.1. To what extent were people drawn into the field as a result of PopPov?
- EQ.1.2. Has PopPov increased research capacity in Africa?
- EQ.1.3. Has PopPov increased the amount of research, dissemination, and interaction regarding PopPov topics?
- EQ.1.4. To what extent did funds stream into the field as a result of PopPov?

¹ We could find no standard definition for *economic demography*. An Internet search found syllabi for six courses on economic demography. Their course descriptions are given in Appendix D. The descriptions have in common that they typically talk about the use of economic perspectives, models, or methods and that they look at the effects of population factors (broadly defined) on economic factors and vice versa.

IV.A.1. To What Extent Were People Drawn into the Field as a Result of PopPov?

We address this separately for doctoral fellows, who represent the future of the field, and for recipients of research grants, who may already be well established in their fields.

IV.A.1.a. Doctoral Fellows

We have already seen above that the PopPov program has supported 56 doctoral students. Forty of them are economists, and 16 are in other disciplines (sociology, demography, social or public policy, geography, public health, epidemiology); hence, the majority (71 percent) of the fellows supported by PopPov have been economists. We have spoken to some of the current and former fellows in our key-informant interviews about whether PopPov support drew them to do research on a PopPov topic. In most cases, they were already interested in the topics they studied before they applied for PopPov funding, and most felt that they would have done research on these topics even in the absence of PopPov funding (though it is difficult to know the counterfactual of what they actually would have done without PopPov funding). Hence, it appears that PopPov funding did not draw most of the fellows *into* the field. However, some fellows reported that PopPov funding increased their opportunities to do research on the topics in which they were already interested. For example, several fellows commented that they probably would not have been able to do as much research (e.g., in terms of fieldwork) without PopPov funding.

Overall, key informants felt that the fellowship program has selected strong students and that they have done high-quality research on population issues in developing countries, though some commented that some of the fellows' research looks at issues that seem broader than the four research questions guiding PopPov (e.g., some of the fellows examined topics related to conflicts, trade, or migration). (We assess the topics and quality of the research done by the fellows in more detail in our discussion of EQ.2 in Section IV.B.)

Virtually every senior researcher with whom we spoke in key-informant interviews felt that the fellowship program has been the most successful component of PopPov. This was confirmed by reports in our survey about economics students but not about students in other disciplines: Ninety percent of PIs and fellows who self-identified as economists either agreed or strongly agreed that PopPov successfully increased the number of economics graduate students studying PopPov issues. (Hereafter, we use *agreed* to describe cases in which the respondent either agreed or strongly agreed with a statement. Also, unless otherwise noted, statistics about survey results are based on the responses of PIs and fellows.) However, only 30 percent of non-economist survey respondents agreed that PopPov had been successful at increasing the number of non-economics doctoral fellows studying PopPov issues. Several key informants mentioned that the fellowship program has filled a noteworthy void, particularly for students who are studying at institutions that do not have institutional training program (T32) training grants from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) or who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents—that is, those who currently have few, if any, other options for dissertation support for studying PopPov topics.²

² Students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents and are studying at an institution that has a T32 training grant from NICHD could compete with other students at their institutions for training funds from those institutional grants. However, doctoral students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents studying at institutions without such grants or who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents do not have this option. In the past, both the Population Council and the Rockefeller Foundation offered fellowships to international students studying population issues, and many population

Although the quality of many of the applications has been high, the applications from students studying at universities in SSA have generally been weak. Nancy Scally, the director of PopPov fellowship program at IIE, commented,

The debate over the quality of the African applicants continues every year, this year (2013) being no different. There was considerable discussion at this year's selection panel meeting about this. The reviewers were all disappointed in the African applications we received.

In our discussions with African researchers, we got the impression that, although capacity-building in SSA was stated as one PopPov goal, the reality is that there is a significant gap in research skills between students at universities in SSA and those studying in more-developed regions. Hence, in the fellowship-award evaluations, the students studying in SSA lost out to the better-trained candidates studying in the United States and Canada, as further discussed in the next section. This is yet another example of tension between the different goals of PopPov; in this case, it seems that the goal of field-building in SSA was largely subordinated to the goal of building up the field by selecting the academically strongest candidates.

IV.A.1.b. Researchers

Most established researchers supported by PopPov were already working on PopPov topics, and, as was the case just noted above for the fellows, most of the researchers were already interested in these issues and said they would have studied them even if they had not received PopPov funding. Nonetheless, the initiative did bring some new people to the field. David Weil, at Brown University, was mentioned by a senior-economist informant as an example of a senior researcher who had not previously worked on population issues who was brought into the field by PopPov.

It does appear that PopPov co-funding helped draw some European researchers into the study of population and development issues. Jan Monteverde Haakonsen, the coordinator for ECONPOP, the Norwegian part of PopPov, which is administered by RCN, commented that ECONPOP has enabled RCN to give focus to an issue that was largely neglected previously: "It has supported six research projects that probably wouldn't have happened otherwise." He added that it opened up "a long-neglected area of research in Norway and [created] an interest for population studies among development researchers who have not paid much attention to this question previously" (email to the authors, October 18, 2013). (Previous demographic research supported by RCN had been on domestic issues.) Gerrie Tuitert, the director for PopDev, the Dutch part of PopPov, noted that, when WOTRO and the Hewlett Foundation established contact, WOTRO was not funding any research on the economic aspects of population and RH, but they saw it as a link between their themes of poverty and health. Currently, sexual and RH is one of the four priority themes of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs directorate-general of development cooperation. (This reprioritization of population issues in the Dutch ministry is also an example of how an increase in research has had an almost immediate and direct impact on policy. We note later that much of the policy impact of PopPov is difficult to evaluate because research takes a long time to yield results and potentially even

centers in the United States used general-support funds they received from the Hewlett Foundation to fund predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows from developing countries. However, such funds have not been available for some time. Hence, the PopPov fellowships fill an important niche, providing a funding option for doctoral students who would not have one otherwise to do research on PopPov topics.

longer to translate into policy changes that even then are difficult to detect.) The WOTRO progress report notes that PopDev has encouraged a development economist who had not previously addressed population and RH to look at these issues and a demographer to do his first study of developing-country issues (WOTRO Science for Global Development, 2008).

Our survey asked researchers about the extent to which PopPov has been successful at increasing the number of junior researchers and senior researchers, by discipline, working on PopPov topics. Eighty percent of survey respondents who self-identified as economists (and 71 percent of all respondents) agreed that PopPov successfully increased the number of junior-level economists studying PopPov topics, but only 50 percent of economists (and 47 percent of all respondents) thought that it had increased the number of senior economists doing so. Indeed, most of the senior economists supported by PopPov were already working on PopPov topics, often for many years, before PopPov began; indeed, the initial U.S. competition was by invitation only to such scholars. This finding reflects PopPov's strategy of allocating funds to the established top-ranked researchers in the field as a way to achieve research results in a relatively quick way (while supporting fellows to build the field over the longer term).

As with the finding about fellows, survey respondents were much less likely to agree that PopPov had increased the number of non-economists studying PopPov issues (compared with their opinions about increasing the number of economists). Only 33 percent of all survey respondents said that they thought that PopPov had increased the number of non-economist junior researchers studying PopPov topics, and the same percentage thought that it had increased the number of senior non-economists in the field.

The finding just noted and others mentioned above are consistent with a general feeling that PopPov focused its effort in building up the number of economists studying PopPov issues and stressing results derived using econometric methods (as a result of the starting hypothesis that finance ministers and World Bank economists would take the results so derived more seriously and would also be more familiar with these methods); they are consistent with interpreting *economic demography* (the field PopPov sought to [re]build) as referring to *economists* studying demographic issues. The sentiment that PopPov has been economist-focused was echoed in our key-informant interviews. Many of the key informants we interviewed who were not directly involved in (but at least somewhat aware of) PopPov viewed PopPov as a program nearly exclusively focused on economists. Two-thirds (65 percent) of survey respondents expressed the opinion that PopPov had succeeded in allowing established economists to increase their research output on PopPov topics, but only 45 percent felt this way about non-economists. Reflecting this sentiment, some survey respondents commented that there was not enough funding for senior non-economists. This is also discussed in Section IV.D.4.b about the conferences.

IV.A.2. Has PopPov Increased Research Capacity in Africa?

As noted earlier, PopPov has supported eight doctoral fellows who were studying at universities in SSA and another four students from SSA who were studying at universities in the United States or Canada. Sixty percent of respondents to our survey agreed that PopPov was successful in bringing African doctoral students into the field. (Interestingly, this response did not vary significantly by nationality of the respondents.) Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, senior researchers from SSA with whom we spoke who reviewed fellowship proposals were disappointed that there have not been more fellows from SSA and that the applications that have been received tended to be weak. They felt that PopPov could be more proactive in trying to

attract fellowship and research applications from African students and scholars. Again, this tension between field-building in SSA and field-building overall seems to have been largely resolved in favor of overall field-building.

The researchers from SSA with whom we spoke in our key-informant interviews all thought that carefully mentored postdoctoral fellowships for African scholars would be a good investment in building the research capacity of African researchers. A postdoctoral fellowship can enable a recent Ph.D. to fill gaps in his or her training and can provide the “seasoning” that enables him or her to develop capabilities for formulating interesting research questions, obtaining funding, preparing publishable papers, and drawing out policy relevance and communicating with policymakers that very few students learn in graduate school or sufficiently absorb from short workshops or training courses. It would also help address the difficulties that some Ph.D. graduates have finding research positions allowing them to continue PopPov-related research and therefore have to either switch fields or leave academia altogether. There is currently very little financial support available for postdoctoral fellowships for individuals from developing countries.

About two-thirds of PopPov research projects are on SSA, and a number of these include African collaborators; they have helped with data collection, and some are coauthors of papers that have resulted. This is especially true for the projects funded by the European partners, who typically require that projects include a developing-country collaborator. For example, ESRC staff noted that the project *The Effects of Obstetric Complications and Their Costs on the Long-Term Economic and Social Well-Being of Women and Their Families in Burkina Faso* increased research partner AFRICSanté’s research capacity in Burkina Faso and that Patrick Ilboudo, of AFRICSanté, is completing a Ph.D. in Oslo on health economics, in part using the project data. Of PIs of research grants who responded to our survey, 83 percent of those based in Europe said that they involved local collaborators in their studies, compared with 60 percent of those based in North America.

However, only 49 percent of survey respondents (58 percent of PIs and 44 percent of fellows) thought that PopPov had succeeded in bringing junior African researchers into the field, and an even lower percentage—35 percent of all respondents (58 percent of PIs and 22 percent of fellows)—thought that this was true for senior African researchers. One key informant, a senior demographer from SSA, felt that there was a great need to strengthen the economic component at SSA institutions that do population research (he said that “economic training is bad in SSA”). (This further puts African applicants at a competitive disadvantage for a program that, like PopPov, focuses on economic demography.) This informant noted that the Hewlett Foundation has separate initiatives to build institutions in SSA.³ He said that he felt that there was less coordination among these initiatives than is optimal.

³ For example, the Hewlett Foundation helps support the Wits-Brown-Colorado-APHRC (WBCA) consortium, which includes two U.S. population centers (Brown University Population Studies and Training Center and the University of Colorado Boulder Population Center) and two African institutions (APHRC and the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa): “The goal of this consortium is to promote African demography and the enhancement of population infrastructure in Africa through an annual scientific meeting, collaborative research, and scholarly exchange” (Brown University, undated). In addition, the foundation

makes grants to strengthen key population-science training programs in Africa. The goal is to increase both the number and quality of master’s and doctoral graduates. Funds support fellowships, dissertation research, curriculum development, and faculty exchanges in Africa and in developed countries, as well as the professional organizations that support population science in Africa and around the world. (William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, undated)

IV.A.3. Has PopPov Increased the Amount of Research, Interaction, and Dissemination Regarding PopPov Topics?

IV.A.3.a. Research

As noted earlier, PopPov has supported more than 100 research projects (including the research projects conducted by the doctoral fellows). To date, these have produced 259 papers, of which 103 are already published in or are under review at journals. (The contributions of this research are discussed in Sections IV.B and IV.C of this report.)

In our survey, there was almost universal agreement that PopPov was successful at increasing research on questions at the intersection of economics and demography (so-called PopPov issues). Out of the 51 PI and fellows responding to Part 2 of our survey, 49 (96 percent) agreed that this was the case. Similar opinions were heard in many of our key-informant interviews. For example, an interviewee who has extensive experience in the population and development field felt that the PopPov initiative has made great strides in supporting rigorous research and that it has generated a revival of interest in the topic and passing that interest onto the next generation of researchers. A senior economist expressed the opinion that PopPov has given legitimacy to the field of economic demography (as applied to developing countries) and provided a boost with its funding; he thought that, in so doing, it has accelerated the pace of progress of research on the PopPov topics. One survey respondent, an economist PI, commented, “Excellent initiative; there are too few funding agencies in this space now, so the grant initiative has played a crucial role in pushing the field forward.” Another survey respondent, a demographer PI, said, “I think it was an enormously productive exercise, and visionary in its conception. It played a role in pushing the donor community to think again about population issues—that was the intention, and it succeeded.” And a PI respondent opined,

There has been a huge increase in work by economists on population-related work presented at top economics conferences and published in top economics journals. I believe [that] PopPov has contributed significantly to this—which I see as a major achievement.

Survey respondents, especially economists, replied that PopPov significantly affected the research that they were able to do. When we asked the survey participants about the impact PopPov had on their own work, 94 percent of economists and 75 percent of non-economists agreed that PopPov funding allowed them to concentrate their research on PopPov issues or SSA. When asked whether they would have done the same amount of research without PopPov funding, 81 percent of economists and 50 percent of non-economists said that they would not have been able to without PopPov funding.

As noted earlier, most of the fellows with whom we spoke in key-informant interviews thought that they would have done research on PopPov topics even without PopPov funding, but several commented that they probably would not have been able to do as much (e.g., in terms of fieldwork) without PopPov funding. One former doctoral fellow, an economist, noted that, without PopPov funding, his project probably would have been done on a smaller scale and he would not have been able to devote as much time to it. Another fellow, an epidemiolo-

The foundation also has an initiative, co-funded with DFID, to build capacity in SSA and a think-tank initiative (co-funded with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Canada’s International Development Research Centre), which includes countries in South Asia and Latin America, as well as in East Africa and West Africa. The last is housed in the foundation’s Global Development and Population Program, which houses PopPov, but none of the institutions listed is a population organization (Hewlett Foundation, 2009).

gist, commented that his involvement with PopPov encouraged him to look at economic outcomes for women in his research.

Many of the doctoral fellows supported by the program who have already completed their Ph.D.'s have stayed in the field of population and development and now hold positions at highly regarded and influential institutions, such as the World Bank, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), indicating that the fellowships did not lead only to a temporary increase in research of PopPov topics for their dissertations but had a long-lasting impact on the field by facilitating the work of early-stage researchers who continued working on these topics. When we asked in our survey how PopPov changed the nature of their research and whether they continued working on PopPov issues after their funding ceased, most respondents reported a significant impact of their PopPov funding. For example, one survey respondent replied, "Yes. Much of my research shifted from questions about institutions and economic growth to population issues." Another survey respondent commented, "As a junior researcher, PopPov has been incredibly valuable for the seed funding to get an ambitious research agenda off the ground and for the connections I've made." Other responses included, "The funding has reiterated my commitment to work on similar issues"; "Yes, the conferences have been a great incentive to continue working on the area"; "My research will remain within PopPov topics"; and "PopPov funding help[ed] open a line of inquiry that I may not have otherwise pursued. I continue to follow that line of inquiry." In our key-informant interviews, a senior economist commented that he probably would have done the research he did for PopPov anyway but that PopPov funding enabled him to support some students to work with him on it, and they have continued to collaborate with him. Only one survey respondent reported that he has not continued working on PopPov issues; he said that this was because he was not able to get his projects funded by other sources.

Several informants felt that PopPov has led to a revival of interest in population issues at the World Bank, by having talented young researchers work on these issues, and has put population back on the agenda at the World Bank. A World Bank researcher commented that PopPov enabled World Bank researchers to complete (and, in some cases, extend) work they already had in progress, but it did not change the direction of the research to be more toward PopPov priority topics. (It is noteworthy that very little of the World Bank research for PopPov was on SSA, and the research that was on SSA was mostly on effects of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome [AIDS].)

IV.A.3.b. Presentations at Conferences

Another indicator of the possible growth of the field of research on PopPov topics is the number of presentations on these topics made at prestigious international conferences. Conference presentations have the advantages that they include not only recently completed work but also work in progress *and* they are peer-reviewed (by conference organizers), although typically at a lesser degree of peer review than at journals. In contrast, a canvassing of journals for changes in the number of articles in a given field encounters the problem of long publication lags.

We have looked at presentations on PopPov topics and on PopPov research at several key conferences attended by scholars who do research on PopPov topics: papers presented at the annual PAA meetings between 2003 and 2013; papers presented between 1997 and 2013 at the Economic Demography Workshop (EDW) held the day before the PAA meeting begins; and those presented at the semiannual BREAD conferences in 2003 through 2013. PAA is the pre-

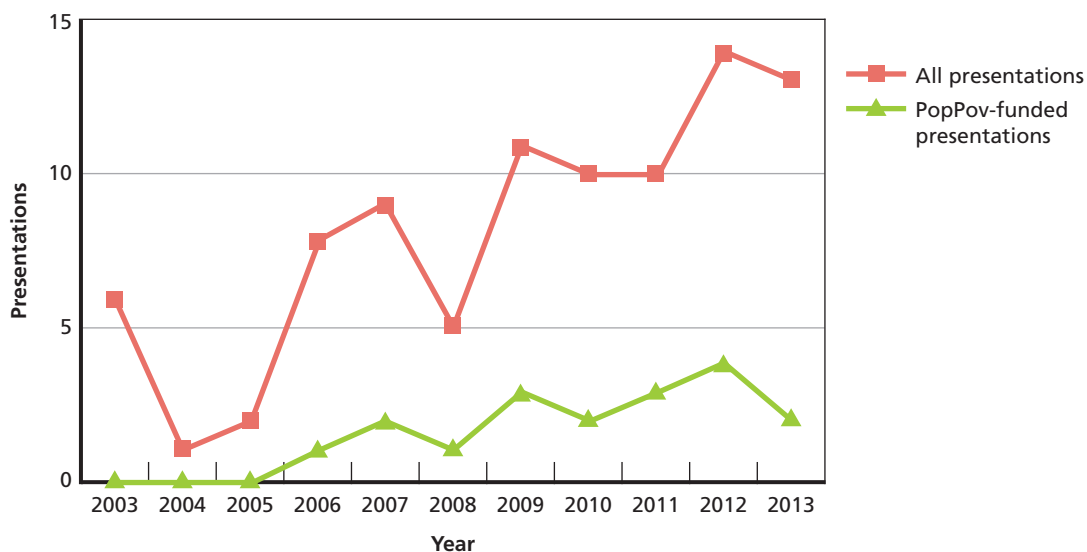
mier annual conference on demographic research. The pre-PAA EDW focuses on economists' research on demographic topics. The BREAD conferences focus on development economics.

The findings that follow are based on our reviews of the programs that are online for these conferences. (Our analyses for the PAA meetings begin with 2003 and, for the pre-PAA EDW, with 1997 because the information about years before these dates is not available online.) In a first step, we look at the variation over time in the number of paper presentations addressing one of the four PopPov research questions listed in Section II in a developing country or countries, regardless of the direction of causality (demographic variables to economic variables or the reverse). We also note in the rest of this section how many of those presentations were on research directly supported by PopPov, which gives an impression of whether there is a possible multiplier effect over time (in the sense that other researchers may begin to conduct research on PopPov topics as more publications on these topics come about by internationally renowned researchers). We also look at data on both of these measures for studies specifically of SSA.

IV.A.3.c. PAA Annual Meetings

Figure IV.1 shows data on papers presented at PAA annual meetings. We see that, pre-PopPov (2003 and 2004), there were a few presentations on PopPov topics. After 2010, the number of presentations grew consistently to four to five times more than in earlier years, and so did the number of papers directly funded by PopPov. Nonetheless, the numbers are very small as a proportion of all papers (around 1,000) presented at each PAA meeting. On average, between 2011 and 2013, PopPov-funded research accounts for about one-third of all presentations on PopPov topics. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis that PopPov funding increased the research output on PopPov topics. This cannot be interpreted causally, however, because we cannot exclude the possibility that this research output would have also increased in the absence of PopPov; the evidence is also consistent with PopPov having had spillover effects as

Figure IV.1
Numbers of Presentations at PAA Annual Meetings on PopPov Topics, Overall and PopPov-Funded, by Year



SOURCES: Programs for annual PAA meetings, 2003–2013 (see PAA, 2013).

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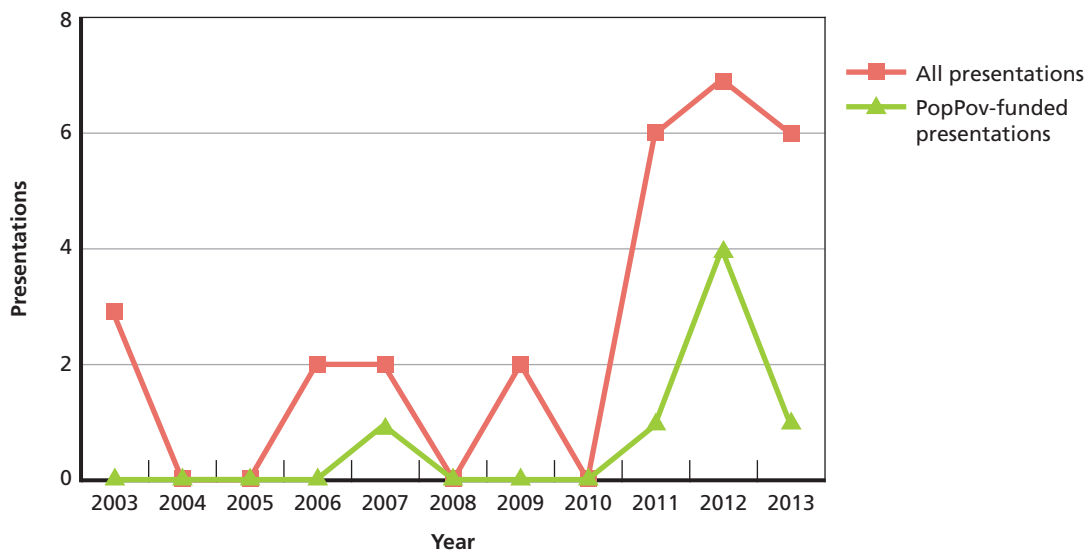
research on PopPov topics increased over time and was partly done by researchers who were not part of the PopPov network, in particular starting in 2010 and thereafter. Again, this cannot be interpreted causally. We note that there have been three papers sessions and a poster session at the PAA annual meetings specifically organized to present PopPov research.⁴

Figure IV.2 considers only presentations that are on PopPov-priority topics *and* deal with SSA. About half of the presentations counted in Figure IV.1 focused on SSA, but very few of these were studies sponsored by PopPov. In particular, there are virtually no such studies before 2011. However, it is noteworthy that, in 2012, *all* PopPov presentations at PAA were on SSA.

IV.A.3.c.i. Economic Demography Workshops the Day Before the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America

For more than 20 years, the EDW has taken place the afternoon of the day before the PAA annual meeting formally begins: “The Workshop provides an opportunity for the detailed presentation of 4–9 papers with more economic content than those generally given in the main meetings” (EDW, 2010). We have looked at the programs for 1997 through 2013 (EDW, 2013), during which there were a total of 97 presentations at the workshop. All of the presenters have been economists or researchers with Ph.D.’s in public policy. We see little difference between years after and before PopPov began. Between 2006 and 2013, there were four papers by researchers who have been funded by PopPov (though it is not clear whether they

Figure IV.2
Numbers of Presentations at PAA Meetings on PopPov Topics in Sub-Saharan Africa, Overall and PopPov-Funded, by Year



SOURCES: Programs for annual PAA meetings, 2003–2013 (see PAA, 2013).

RAND RRS27-4.2

⁴ A session in 2007 titled “Impact of Population Dynamics and Reproductive Health on Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction” was chaired by Tamara Fox of the Hewlett Foundation; one in 2009 titled “Blending Macro and Micro Measures of Fertility Impacts on Economic Outcomes” was chaired by Tom Merrick; one in 2012 called “Human Capital and Reaping the Demographic Dividend in Sub-Saharan Africa,” made up of three papers on PopPov research, was chaired by Ruth Levine of the Hewlett Foundation; and Marlene Lee of the Population Reference Bureau and colleagues presented a poster about PopPov in 2013.

were reporting on PopPov research); between 1997 and 2005, three papers were represented by researchers who later received PopPov funding. Between 2006 and 2013, two PopPov researchers were discussants; between 1997 and 2005, four researchers who later received funding from PopPov were discussants.⁵ It is noteworthy that, at most, 25 of the 97 papers presented between 1997 and 2013 were on developing countries,⁶ and very few (six) were on SSA (two before 2005 and four since then). However, there have been more papers on developing countries since 2006 (17) than before (eight), but none of these except for those presented by PopPov researchers was on a PopPov topic, and even those presented by PopPov researchers are not on central PopPov topics. Hence, PopPov researchers (and PopPov topics) are not very well represented among the presenters or discussants at the EDW. This is unfortunate because this is the type of audience one should want to reach if the goal is to rebuild the field of economic demography. Looking at these programs also illustrates that the term *economic demography* is far too broad to characterize the issues that PopPov seeks to address; for example, many of the papers presented at the EDW are on developed countries, and many of the relatively few that are on developing countries are on topics (e.g., marriage, migration, aging, circumcision) that are not central to PopPov concerns.

IV.A.3.c.ii. Semiannual Conferences of the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development

BREAD is another potentially important conference venue. As we discussed at the beginning of this subsection, PopPov explicitly recognized a lack of research on population issues among development economists. BREAD is a nonprofit organization, founded in 2002, dedicated to encourage research and scholarship in development economics. Its main activities are conferences, working-paper and policy-paper series, and a summer school. The conferences are much more selective than PAA, with only a handful of papers (typically between six and ten) chosen for each of the semiannual conferences. Since 2003, there have been 24 conferences with a total of 179 presentations; of these, five conferences (one each in 2010, 2011, and 2013, and both conferences in 2012) were co-sponsored by the Hewlett Foundation. In looking at the programs for all 24 BREAD conferences, we identified nine papers that were on topics that we determined as being of relevance to PopPov: two in 2005, three in 2009, three in 2010, and one in 2011. Of these, two used data from SSA; the rest were either multicountry studies (using, for example, DHS data), used data from outside SSA (in particular, India), or were theory contributions not conducting empirical analyses. Four out of the seven presentations on PopPov-relevant topics in the past four years were by researchers whose research was supported by PopPov.

These data on the BREAD conferences can be interpreted in two ways: On the one hand, there were many conferences in which no papers on PopPov topics were presented, suggesting that population issues did not make big inroads into development economics as measured by the topics of presentations at this prestigious conference. However, on the other hand, it is encouraging that more such papers are observed in later than in earlier years, which could indicate a time trend toward more high-quality research on these topics. Furthermore, it is quite noteworthy that the majority of presentations on PopPov-relevant topics in the past four years were by researchers whose research was sponsored by PopPov.

⁵ Discussants' names are not listed for all the years.

⁶ Many paper titles do not mention the geographic settings for the research.

IV.A.3.c.iii. Conclusions About Presentations at These Three Conferences

The data from the PAA annual meetings and BREAD suggest that demographic-economic research on PopPov issues is being carried out and disseminated more widely than in the recent past. The increase in presentations of PopPov-type research occurs in tandem with the number of papers based directly on PopPov-funded efforts. The number of SSA-focused presentations has also risen sharply in the past few years. For the pre-PAA EDW, we see relatively little involvement of PopPov researchers, even though this workshop would be a good opportunity to increase exposure of PopPov research to economic demographers.

IV.A.3.c.iv. Other Presentations of PopPov Research

In addition to the venues just discussed, PopPov research has been presented at a wide variety of international venues that reach economics, development, demographic, health, and African audiences, including international conferences (e.g., of the IUSSP, the Union for African Population Studies, International Health Economics Association, International AIDS Society meetings, National Bureau of Economic Research [NBER] Africa Project conference in Tanzania, Women Deliver); key conferences in the United States (e.g., the American Economic Association annual meeting, Northeast Universities Development Consortium, the Midwest International Economic Development Conference, the Pacific Conference for Development Economics); the World Bank; and universities and research institutions around the world. Hence, although there were not many presentations of PopPov research at the three specific forums we examined earlier, PopPov researchers have done a good job disseminating their research to a wide variety of professional audiences. (We discuss outreach to policy audiences in Section IV.C.)

IV.A.3.d. Interaction

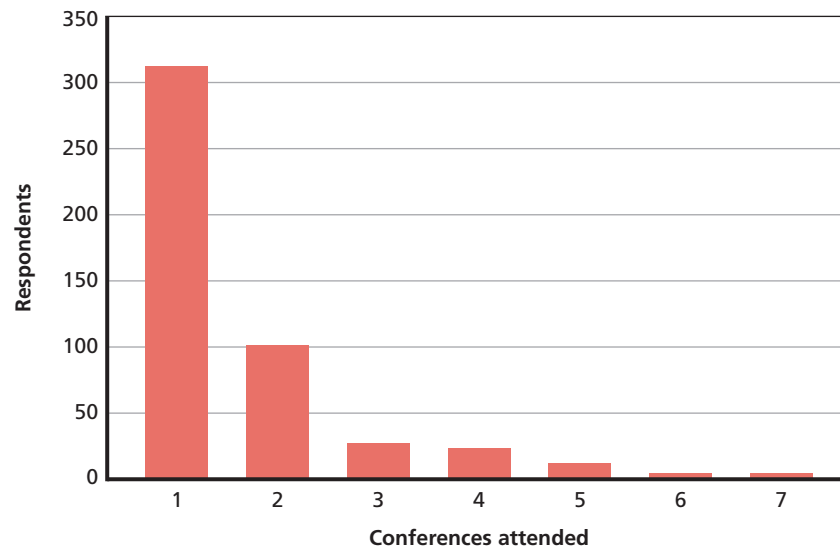
PopPov has promoted some cross-fertilization between economists and non-economists and across regional focuses. Nearly half (47 percent) of economist respondents to our survey agreed that PopPov funding induced them to learn more about demographic methods, and just over half (53 percent) of non-economists agreed that PopPov funding induced them to learn more methods used in economic analysis. A survey respondent who is a doctoral fellow from SSA noted, “The inclusion of African researchers encourages more work on Africa, and emphasizes those research issues most important to the continent.”

A senior-economist key informant opined that PopPov has promoted exchange among people interested in population and development. The conferences were singled out in this regard. A sociology doctoral student commented, “The conferences were excellent networking opportunities and led to fruitful conversations about my research with more senior researchers and researchers outside my discipline, as well as potential collaborations.” A doctoral fellow responded in the survey that PopPov

has certainly brought me in touch with other peers interested in my research interests, but also introduced me to experts in the field. The ability to attend the conferences as a fellow was very helpful in creating a network outside of my university.

The sense of belonging and the opportunities for networking are enhanced by the fact that many people have attended more than one conference, as seen in Figure IV.3. More than one-third (36 percent) of people who have attended a PopPov conference have attended more than one, though only 15 percent have attended at least three.

Figure IV.3
Frequency Distribution of Number of Conferences Attended



SOURCES: Data from attendance lists for each of the PopPov conferences.

RAND RR527-4.3

The connections developed through PopPov have led to new employment positions and new collaborations. One doctoral-fellow survey respondent commented that he was able to get a postdoctoral position through the contacts he had developed through PopPov, and another fellow noted, “It even helped my job search process.” Another doctoral-fellow survey respondent said,

Being a member/dissertation fellow of PopPov has been the highlight of my academic career. Attending the conferences has led to new research ideas and . . . introduced me to people who have disseminated my work. I have met co-authors through the network, and in conversations with people in the network I have conceived new research ideas. For me personally, it has made a large difference.

One PI survey respondent from Europe said, “It has strengthened our South/North network a *lot*.” One fellow studying economics said, “Most of my current and future collaborators are connections from PopPov.”

The conferences and more generally the network created by PopPov have encouraged more interchange between micro- and macroeconomists and, in this way, led to a collaboration that otherwise might not have come about. Within PopPov, especially in some of the early discussions (e.g., at CGD), there has been some tension between the approaches of micro- and macroeconomists, with the former group more strongly focused on adequately establishing causality, and hence the call for more use of experiments, instrumental variables, and panel data. PopPov has led to closer connections between the two groups. David Canning of Harvard (a key figure in the macro camp) and T. Paul Schultz of Yale (a key figure in the micro camp) published an article together, “The Economic Consequences of Reproductive Health and Family Planning,” in an issue of *The Lancet* on FP (Canning and Schultz, 2012). According to Schultz (personal communication, June 22, 2013), PopPov played a role in this collaboration: “Certainly PopPov

has provided a venue in which David and I have interacted over the years, and thus facilitated the exchange of views that was captured in the *Lancet* paper.” Another key informant, who has been involved with population and development issues for many years, feels that the interactions fostered by PopPov between the micro- and macroeconomists has led researchers in the latter group to be more careful in their attempts to infer and assert causality.

IV.A.4. To What Extent Did Funds Stream into the Field as a Result of PopPov?

The Hewlett Foundation has invested approximately \$25 million of its own funds in research and training on population and development issues through its support of PopPov. Did this lead to greater funding for research on these issues? It clearly did in the sense that, by bringing in partners, Hewlett was able to leverage its own investment funding. The World Bank contributed \$1.5 million of its own resources toward the initiative to match the amount of funds it received from the foundation. The four European partners together received \$7 million from the foundation and invested a nearly equal amount of their own funds in the PopPov initiative.

As mentioned earlier, most respondents to our survey agreed that PopPov funding had allowed them to concentrate their research on PopPov issues or SSA or both and that, without this funding, it would have been unlikely that they would have done the same amount of work in economic demography. This funding not only seems to have been crucial but, pertinent to the present question, also may have brought about additional funding. More than 80 percent of PIs reported having received other funding for their PopPov work, with the other sources frequently cited being home institutions (e.g., universities), NIH, and the World Bank (presumably, the World Bank co-funding for PopPov). We cannot tell whether this other funding would have come about in the absence of PopPov funding.

It is difficult to measure the total amount of other institutional funding available for the types of research that PopPov has sought to support. NICHD, the National Institute on Aging (NIA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF) are probably the closest to funding the types of rigorous research that PopPov endeavors to support regarding RQ.1 and RQ.2; and the USAID Office of Population and Reproductive Health and Office of Health, Infectious Diseases and Nutrition, as well as the institutions just mentioned, support some intervention assessments that are along the lines of RQ.3 and RQ.4. However, these institutions fund research on a much broader set of topics than PopPov. Even more difficult to assess, and beyond the scope of this evaluation, is how funding by these agencies may have changed in response to PopPov, in the sense that these institutions may have actively adjusted their priorities vis-à-vis economic and demographic issues (as opposed to responding passively by awarding more grants on these topics in response to having more high-quality applications on them).

IV.A.5. Summary for Evaluation Question 1

To sum up regarding EQ.1, PopPov has supported researchers working on PopPov issues, though many of these were already working on these topics or, in the case of the fellows, intended to work on them; it is difficult to know the counterfactual of how many of these researchers would have worked on PopPov topics (and have done the amount of research on them that they did) had they not received PopPov support. The program has not brought many new senior researchers into the field. This is partly the result of the design because the initial competition was by invitation only to selected people already in the field. However, there have been a few notable exceptions. The program appears to have enabled researchers already in the field to do more than they may have been able to do without PopPov funding (e.g., additional fieldwork).

It has also increased the number of European researchers working on population, health, and development issues, although, as will be seen ahead, many of these are not doing the kind of economic demography research that the CGD working group advocated.

It is noteworthy that the majority of the doctoral fellows funded by PopPov are economists. The fellows program is viewed by many as PopPov's biggest success. It has reached many who would not have been eligible otherwise for dissertation funding. Many of the fellows are continuing to do research on PopPov topics. The newly instituted alumni grants for fellows are helping several of them do this.

However, as will be seen ahead, a considerable amount of PopPov support for research grants has gone to non-economists, and the majority of the journal articles so far produced with project funding have been in non-economic journals.

Except at the doctoral level for U.S.-based students, instead of doing the hard work of really growing the field by bringing in new faces and training folks who most need it, PopPov generally took the route of supporting things that were easier and less risky.

IV.B. Evaluation Question 2: What Contribution Has PopPov Research Made to the Evidence Base Regarding Relationships Between Demographic Change or Behavior and Economic Outcomes?

In the previous section, we investigated the extent to which the field was built up, mainly in terms of the number of people in it, their participation in high-level conferences, and the funding being invested to study PopPov research questions. In this section, we evaluate the *knowledge output* so generated. In particular, we address the following subquestions:

- EQ.2.1. To what extent has the research conducted for PopPov addressed each of the four research questions noted above (which came from the CGD working group)?
- EQ.2.2. To what extent have new findings come from PopPov research? Has knowledge been added about a particular country or setting? Were new relationships investigated?
- EQ.2.3. To what extent has PopPov research been done in underinvestigated areas, particularly in SSA?
- EQ.2.4. Were new techniques, metrics, or survey methodologies used? Were new data collected?
- EQ.2.5. What is the quality of research done under PopPov, as judged by the types of publications that have resulted?

To conduct these analyses, we draw mainly on the SOPP report and the EDPP database described in Section III. EDPP documents the following for each paper: funder; geographic setting for the research; nationality and discipline of the grantee; whether fellow or research grantee; year the project was funded; whether new data were collected and type of data and methods used in the research; which of the four research questions the research addressed;

and, if published in a journal, the name of the journal, the main type of audience that journal reaches, and the impact factor (IF) of the journal (defined ahead).⁷

As of August 2013, we had identified 259 papers supported by PopPov—an impressive number. Around 40 percent of these have been published in journals ($n = 68$) or as chapters in books ($n = 8$) or are under journal review ($n = 27$). The rest are available as working papers (95), dissertations (39), or are unpublished (22). Some of the latter group are earlier versions of the papers in the former group. For this reason, to avoid double-counting, in this section, we sometimes present statistics only for the former group. Table IV.1 shows that, of the 103 journal articles, book chapters, and papers under review at journals, 30 are by fellows and 73 are for research grantees' projects.

We have looked at how the types of publications differ by the year when funding was first received but have not seen much evidence of a delay in getting research published (or at least submitted to journals) for grantees whose funding has ended. For example, the percentage of papers by graduated fellows that is published or under review varies little between earlier and later cohorts. As seen earlier, fellows are more likely to have papers under review, while grantees have more papers already published. (This may partly reflect the fact that the fellowship program began several years after the grant program.)

We now turn to the five subquestions.

Table IV.1
Papers Published with PopPov Support, by Type of Paper and Whether for Fellowship or Research-Project Grants

Type of Paper	Total	Fellows	Research Grantees
Journal article	68 (26%)	10 (9%)	58 (41%)
Book chapter	8 (3%)	1 (1%)	7 (5%)
Under journal review	27 (10%)	19 (16%)	8 (6%)
Working paper (including job market papers)	95 (37%)	44 (38%)	51 (36%)
Dissertation	39 (15%)	39 (34%)	n.a.
None of the above (unpublished or no information)	22 (8%)	3 (3%)	19 (13%)
Total	259 (100%)	116 (100%)	143 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

⁷ An academic journal's IF is a measure reflecting the average number of citations to recent articles published in the journal. It is frequently used as a proxy for the relative importance of a journal within its field, with journals with higher IFs deemed to be more important than those with lower ones. Caution has been advised in using IFs to compare *across* fields (Amin and Mabe, 2000). We use two-year IFs, which are measured as the average number of citations received per paper published in that journal during the preceding two years. Not all journals have IFs, as can be seen in Table IV.11.

Citation counts, e.g., using article databases, such as Web of Science, is another metric sometimes used to assess impact; however, given the fact that many PopPov projects only recently yielded findings and given the lags in publication, we decided that these would not be very useful for this case because there has not been sufficient time for the citation record to accumulate.

IV.B.1. To What Extent Has the Research Conducted for PopPov Addressed Each of the Four Research Questions?

We have assigned each paper a topic number, indicating which of the four PopPov research questions it investigates, based on the description of the *project* in Appendix B of the SOPP report.⁸ The four research questions are as follows:

- RQ.1. Given the projected trends in fertility and mortality changes, what are their implications for economic growth and income distribution and the incidence of poverty (“Macroeconomic” in Tables IV.2 through IV.4)?
- RQ.2. How does investment in RH affect economic conditions at the household level, including the productivity, labor force participation and savings behavior of women, children, and households (“Microeconomic”)?
- RQ.3. How do different types of investments in RH affect the health of women and children (“Health outcomes”)?
- RQ.4. How do the type and organization of services affect their effectiveness, including ability to reach poor and vulnerable populations (“Service delivery”)?

As seen in Table IV.2, almost half (46 percent) the papers prepared for PopPov are on the questions that have to do with the effects of demographic variables on economic outcomes (broadly defined, e.g., to include education); more of the papers (27 percent) are micro analyses (RQ.2) than macro (19 percent, RQ.1). Another 14 percent of the papers address RQ.3, while only 3 percent address the effectiveness and equity issues of RQ.4. More than one-third of the papers are not on one of the four research questions listed above; many of these (24 percent)

Table IV.2
Distribution of Papers, by Research Question and Whether by a Principal Investigator or Fellow

RQ	PI	Fellow	Total
1. Macroeconomic	35 (24%)	14 (12%)	49 (19%)
2. Microeconomic	47 (33%)	23 (20%)	70 (27%)
3. Health outcomes	19 (13%)	18 (16%)	37 (14%)
4. Service delivery	3 (2%)	6 (5%)	9 (3%)
Other	23 (16%)	39 (34%)	62 (24%)
Reverse causality ^a	16 (11%)	16 (14%)	32 (12%)
Total	143 (100%)	116 (100%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP; topic of paper is based on coding of topic of *project* in SOPP.

^a For example, the effect of economic variables on fertility.

NOTE: Because of rounding, percentage columns might not sum precisely.

⁸ We note that sometimes the papers prepared for a project did not match the goals stated in the project description. For example, some projects that purported to look at the effects of demographic variables on economic outcomes prepared papers that described levels of fertility and contraceptive use. Hence, Table IV.2 probably understates the number of papers that should be coded as “other” or “reverse causality.”

look at topics outside the scope of the four PopPov research questions (e.g., marriage, migration), while others look at the relationship between economic outcomes and fertility and RH variables but at the effect of the former on the latter, which is the opposite of the direction of causation in RQ.1 and RQ.2; we call this *reverse causality*. More of the papers by research grantees than by fellows look at one of the four PopPov research questions; nearly half (48 percent) of the papers by fellows are not on one of the four PopPov questions, to which we hereafter refer as *out of scope*.

The distribution of topics varies by the discipline of the grantee (Table IV.3). Demographers, sociologists, and psychologists are the most likely to look at RQ.2; medical and health researchers were the most likely to look at RQ.4 and at issues with the reverse causality of RQ.1 and RQ.2. The disciplines other than economics and demography are the most likely to look at topics out of scope of the four PopPov research questions.

The topics considered differ across funders. As seen in Table IV.4, all but one of the papers funded by the original grants made directly by the Hewlett Foundation were on RQ.1 (macroeconomic effects); recall these grants were made because Hewlett viewed them as being at the “sweet spot” of PopPov. The papers prepared by the PRB fellows are especially likely to be out of scope of the four PopPov questions, as are those funded by AFD (which funded several projects on migration). The majority of the papers funded by RCN are on the opposite direction of causality as posited in RQ.1 and RQ.2. We have also looked at how the distribution of topics differs across the regions being studied, but we do not see any striking differences between the papers on SSA and those on other regions. We did not have access to the research proposals and hence do not know whether projects that were ultimately “off target” were initially so or whether the researchers did not do what they proposed.

We note that the World Bank proposed to do research that had both micro- and macroeconomic aspects (and to link them). However, we learned in our key-informant interviews that most of the macroeconomic projects the World Bank planned, which would have used population projections to look at demands for social services, did not materialize because the researchers transferred to other units.

Table IV.3
Distribution of Papers, by Topic and Grantee’s Discipline

RQ	Discipline of PI or Fellow						Total
	Economics	Demography	Medicine or Public Health	Political Science or Public Policy	Sociology or Psychology	Unknown	
1. Macroeconomic	38 (24%)	6 (29%)			4 (14%)	1 (25%)	49 (19%)
2. Microeconomic	46 (28%)	9 (43%)	3 (16%)		12 (42%)		70 (27%)
3. Health outcomes	29 (18%)	2 (10%)		6 (25%)			37 (14%)
4. Service delivery	6 (4%)		3 (16%)				9 (4%)
Other	29 (18%)	4 (19%)	5 (26%)	10 (42%)	11 (38%)	3 (75%)	62 (24%)
Reverse causality	14 (9%)		8 (42%)	8 (33%)	2 (7%)		32 (12%)
Total	162 (100%)	21 (100%)	19 (100%)	24 (100%)	29 (100%)	4 (100%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Percentages are of column totals. Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

Table IV.4
Distribution of Papers, by Topic and Funder

Funder	RQ						Total
	1. Macroeconomic	2. Microeconomic	3. Health Outcomes	4. Service Delivery	Other	Reverse Causality	
Fellow							
PRB dissertation	4 (19%)		1 (5%)		14 (67%)	2 (10%)	21 (100%)
IIE fellow	10 (10%)	23 (24%)	16 (17%)	6 (6%)	28 (29%)	14 (14%)	97 (100%)
U.S.-based research-grant donor							
Hewlett Foundation direct grant	16 (94%)				1 (6%)		17 (100%)
PRB	11 (28%)	11 (28%)	12 (31%)		5 (13%)		39 (100%)
World Bank	4 (17%)	5 (21%)	4 (17%)	2 (8%)	9 (38%)		24 (100%)
European partner							
AFD		3 (33%)		1 (11%)	5 (56%)		9 (100%)
ESRC		9 (64%)	4 (29%)			1 (7%)	14 (100%)
NWO-WOTRO	4 (40%)	6 (60%)					10 (100%)
RCN		13 (46%)				15 (54%)	28 (100%)
Total	49 (19%)	70 (27%)	37 (14%)	9 (4%)	62 (24%)	32 (12%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Percentages are of row totals. Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

One survey respondent, an economist research grantee, commented,

the agenda of PopPov has gotten too diffuse. I thought that the question to be addressed was how population/reproductive health issues affect economic/social outcomes (like poverty), and also how these things affect population. [However,] a large number of PopPov projects are simply about things that have people/reproduction/health in them.

IV.B.2. To What Extent Have New Findings Come from PopPov Research? Has Knowledge Been Added About a Particular Country or Setting? Were New Relationships Investigated?

In Part 2 (the anonymous part), our survey asked, “What do you think have been the most important research contributions of the PopPov initiative (such as key publications or specific research findings by PopPov researchers)?” Some respondents mentioned specific studies, such as these:

The research that stands out for me is that done by David Canning, David Weil and David Bloom on micro-macro economic effects of fertility, for example, on fertility, female labor force participation, and the demographic dividend [DD] and simulation effects of fertility on economic growth. This type of analysis always has far reaching implications to the work of many other researchers and of interest to policy makers.

(Several other respondents also mentioned studies by Canning, Weil, and Bloom.)

The economic and demographic consequences of high sex ratios, the effect of the sex composition of first births on labor force participation across the developing world.

Ashraf, Field and Lee’s paper on contraceptive use decision-making in Zambia and McKelvey, Thomas, and Frankenberg’s paper on contraceptive use in Indonesia during an economic crisis.

The work on natural experiments of the impact of shifts in family planning access (e.g., the work by Kelly Jones and Ian Salas).

[S]tudying question of abortion in a West African area. How politics act about abortion. Lives of women post abortion stigma in care area (hospitals).

Kravdal’s analyses on effects of education.

RCTs on cash transfer incentives for staying in schools, and other similar topics.

Others replied more generally, e.g., “Research on maternal and child health, child labor”; “A growing body of serious research on the economic causes and consequences of population dynamic”; “Evidence based results on the causal relation between family size and children’s wellbeing”; “Highlighted importance of household and individual decision making and initia-

tive regarding reproductive health on such issues as how people make inferences about risk and household bargaining”; and “Inter-relationships between reproductive health and economic development with a particular emphasis on poverty.”

Some responses were very general (“My impression is that PopPov has contributed with a number of empirical contributions”), while others showed a lack of awareness of specific contributions (“[I am] not sufficiently familiar with specifics of other projects”; “I don’t have a broad enough perspective to have a view on this”; and “I am not aware of the research contributions of the PopPov initiative. This points to a need to advertise more actively the research carried out in the Network”). And others were skeptical about the contributions: “I think that the PopPov research contributions did not add much to what was available in the literature, it promised more than it was delivered. One reason was the extremely ethnocentric economicist [sic] focus of the work.”

Part 2 of our survey included this question: “What were the main contributions of your own PopPov-sponsored research?” It provided specific answer options; multiple responses were possible. Responses for the 19 PIs and 33 fellows who responded to Part 2 of the survey are shown in Table IV.5. The highest proportions of fellows thought that their main contributions were in investigating new relationships and applying existing methodologies to new settings; many grantees also mentioned the latter. When asked to elaborate, several respondents commented that the issues they were investigating had not been previously studied in their research settings:

We find that the brothers of a first born girl get better education, I have not seen this relation elsewhere. Our data are from Nepal, where there are not many studies of the causal relations between economic and demographic variables.

Another responded that his research provided “evidence for dynamics between RH and income/well-being which were established in developed countries, however lacked evidence from SSA or from developing countries in general.” One said, “[W]e investigated the relation between nutrition knowledge and labour supply which is a new relationship,” and another replied, “[W]e have so far showed that in Rwanda, infant mortality and the gender preference

Table IV.5
Self-Reported Main Contributions of PopPov-Sponsored Research

Contribution	Total (n = 42)	PIs (n = 19)	Fellows (n = 33)
New or elaborated estimation technique	10	4	6
New or elaborated metric	7	3	4
New survey methodology	4	3	1
The application of existing methodology to new settings	31	7	24
Investigating new relationship	36	13	23
Data generation	15	8	7
Other	7	2	5

SOURCE: Responses to Part 2 of our online survey.

NOTE: Multiple responses were possible.

is an obstacle to birth spacing and family limitation, both affecting the health of the mother and reducing income surplus in a family.”

The SOPP report (Lee and Belohlav, 2013) highlights research results that bear directly on the four PopPov research questions. In the interest of space, we do not review these here and refer the reader to that report.

IV.B.3. To What Extent Has PopPov Research Been Done on Underinvestigated Areas, Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa?

In EDPP, we have classified each paper by the region that is studied. Table IV.6 shows the distribution of regions by type of paper. Sixty percent of all papers prepared for PopPov, and 62 percent of those that are published in journal or books or under review at journals, are on SSA, the priority region for PopPov. The research on SSA has been on a number of countries in both the Anglophone and Francophone parts of the region, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, as well as some for the region as a whole. Another 18 percent of the papers prepared for PopPov (13 percent of those published in journal or books or under review at journals) are on Asia (though most of these are on Bangladesh, China, India, and Indonesia, which we do not regard as underinvestigated areas); 3 percent (4 percent) are on Latin America; and 7 percent (4 percent) are of multiple regions. The rest are papers on other regions or are theoretical studies. We note that fewer of the dissertations are on SSA (49 percent) than is true of work that has been (or is under review to be) published, while a higher proportion of unpublished papers (77 percent) than published papers is on SSA. Hence, PopPov has generated a lot of published research on SSA, with less by fellows than by other groups, and more of it unpublished than is true for other types of papers.

The regions considered in papers differ across funders, as seen in Table IV.7. The percentage on SSA was low (33 percent) for the early (PRB) fellows but is about the same for the more-recent IIE fellows as for the overall total. (The difference undoubtedly reflects the fact that some of the IIE fellowships were awarded to students studying at institutions in SSA.) The percentage of papers by research grantees on SSA is below average for each of the U.S.-based partners and is above average for each of the European donors, with *all* of the papers supported by NWO-WOTRO being on SSA.

IV.B.4. Were New Techniques, Metrics, or Survey Methodologies Used? Were New Data Collected?

The CGD working group felt that progress in researching the economic effects of demographics and RH had been limited by the extensive reliance on data from the DHSs, which are weak on economic information and are cross-sectional. The CGD working group recommended more use of panel data on SSA, efforts to make demographic surveillance system (DSS) data more accessible, and more use of RCTs. We have looked at the types of data (including whether new data were collected) and methods used in the papers prepared with PopPov funding and in research presented at PopPov conferences. Part 1 of our survey asked about the types of data and methods used for each paper. Because not all grantees responded to our survey, we have supplemented this with data from Appendix A of SOPP, our review of some of the papers prepared for PopPov, and our review of papers we saw presented at the 2012 and 2013 PopPov conferences.

Table IV.6
Distribution of Papers, by Type of Paper and Region of Study

Type of Paper	Area of Study							Total
	SSA	Asia	Latin America	Europe	Multiregion	Other	Theoretical	
Journal publication	43 (63%)	6 (9%)	4 (6%)	2 (3%)	3 (4%)		10 (15%)	68 (100%)
Book chapter	3 (38%)	2 (25%)					3 (38%)	8 (100%)
Under journal review	18 (67%)	5 (19%)			1 (4%)		3 (11%)	27 (100%)
Subtotal of above	64 (62%)	13 (13%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	4 (4%)		16 (16%)	103 (100%)
Working paper	54 (57%)	22 (23%)	2 (2%)		5 (5%)	3 (3%)	9 (10%)	95 (100%)
Dissertation	19 (49%)	8 (21%)	1 (3%)		7 (18%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	39 (100%)
None of the above (unpublished or no information)	17 (77%)	2 (9%)			3 (14%)			22 (100%)
Total	154 (60%)	45 (18%)	7 (3%)	2 (1%)	19 (7%)	5 (2%)	25 (10%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Percentages are of row totals. Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

Table IV.7
Distribution of Papers, by Funder and Region of Study

Funder	Area of Study							Total
	SSA	Asia	Latin America	Europe	Multiregion	Other	Theoretical	
Fellow								
PRB dissertation	7 (33%)	6 (29%)	4 (19%)		3 (14%)	1 (5%)		21 (100%)
IIE fellow	59 (61%)	20 (21%)	1 (1%)		7 (7%)	4 (4%)	4 (4%)	97 (100%)
U.S.-based research-grant donor								
Hewlett Foundation	2 (12%)	3 (18%)		2 (12%)	7 (41%)		3 (18%)	17 (100%)
PRB	22 (56%)	9 (23%)	2 (5%)				6 (15%)	39 (100%)
World Bank	11 (46%)	4 (17%)			2 (9%)		7 (29%)	24 (100%)
European partner								
AFD	8 (89%)						1 (11%)	9 (100%)
ESRC	13 (93%)						1 (7%)	14 (100%)
NWO-WOTRO	10 (100%)							10 (100%)
RCN	22 (79%)	3 (11%)					3 (11%)	28 (100%)
Total	154 (59%)	45 (17%)	7 (3%)	2 (1%)	19 (7%)	5 (2%)	25 (10%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Percentages are of row totals. Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

IV.B.4.a. Data

When elaborating about the main contributions of their research (shown in Table IV.5), some respondents mentioned unique features of their data:

The mother-based (fertility-based) survey approach applied gives unique possibilities for studying the mobility of children away from households of origin. The local network module included in the Benin survey is innovative, and may provide new information about social integration of communities and single households, enriching analytical opportunities.

Another commented,

We collected data in six-month intervals as never-married women and men transitioned into marriage, and tested for HIV at each round. This enabled us to capture events as they unfolded, greatly reducing retrospective reporting bias, and to aid in identifying risk behaviors as they happened. We also included open-ended questions, rare in large-scale surveys.

Another responded, “We collected the data using PDAs [personal digital assistants] which was highly innovative in the setting.”

We see in Table IV.8 that, consistent with the CGD recommendation, more than 100 of the papers prepared for PopPov have used panel data; this is the modal category. There are differences across donors. Papers by IIE fellows and by grantees funded by PRB and the World Bank are more likely than those funded by other donors to have used panel data. Papers

Table IV.8
Distribution of Papers, by Funder and Type of Data

Funder	Type of Data				Total
	Panel	Cross-Sectional	Qualitative	Other or Unknown	
Fellow					
PRB dissertation	9 (43%)	9 (43%)		3 (14%)	21 (100%)
IIE fellow	49 (51%)	27 (28%)	3 (3%)	18 (19%)	97 (100%)
U.S.-based research-grant donor					
Hewlett Foundation	1 (6%)	13 (76%)		3 (18%)	17 (100%)
PRB	29 (74%)	5 (13%)		5 (13%)	39 (100%)
World Bank	12 (50%)	9 (38%)		3 (13%)	24 (100%)
European partner					
AFD	1 (11%)	4 (44%)	1 (11%)	3 (33%)	9 (100%)
ESRC	5 (37%)	2 (14%)	3 (21%)	4 (29%)	14 (100%)
NWO-WOTRO	1 (10%)	7 (70%)		2 (20%)	10 (100%)
RCN	7 (25%)	9 (32%)	6 (21%)	6 (21%)	28 (100%)
Total	114 (44%)	85 (33%)	13 (5%)	47(18%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Percentages are of row totals. Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

supported by ESRC and RCN were more likely to use qualitative data than those funded by other partners. Early papers funded directly by the Hewlett Foundation and those supported by NWO-WOTRO are the most likely of the funders to have used cross-sectional data. We observed that a significant number of the papers presented at recent PopPov conferences and of those funded by PopPov have used DHS data, though they have sometimes combined those data in interesting ways with data from other sources (e.g., from the national census or on weather readings for the times of demographic events).

Our survey asked whether the data used in projects referred to individuals or aggregates. Of those who responded, more than three-quarters reported using individual-level data. The remaining projects were equally split between using aggregate data only and using a combination of both individual and aggregate data. Nine respondents reported matching in administrative data; U.S.-based donors funded all of these. Eight respondents reported that they used data from RCTs or experiments; two of these were funded by ESRC and the rest by the U.S.-based donors. Sixteen projects, spread across the donors, reported doing original data collection. In half the cases, the collection was of quantitative data only; in two (both IIE economist fellows), it was of qualitative data only, and, in six cases, both types of data were collected. In nine of the 16 cases in which original data were collected, the respondents reported that they shared the data with the research community. An example of this is the ESRC-supported project “Effects of Reproductive Health on Poverty in Malawi,” which resulted in a publicly available data set containing information on health status, anthropometrics, health care use, consumption, adverse events, and transfers, among others (UK Data Service, undated).

IV.B.4.b. Methods of Analysis

As seen in Table IV.5, relatively few survey respondents mentioned new methods or metrics as the main contributions of their PopPov research. When asked to elaborate in the survey about new methods, some commented about specific methods in their research, e.g., the use of “a number of spatial estimation techniques (Spatial lag, spatial filtering) in my research for more accurate research results.” ESRC staff commented that the project on Malawi mentioned earlier developed “a new tool (STATA software—BootWildCT) that researchers can use to solve a statistical inference problem due to small number of clusters.”

Our survey also asked about the specific methods used in the research. Table IV.9 shows the distribution of the responses. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression is the method reported most often, followed by instrumental variables, which is one of the methods recommended by the CGD working group. Papers based on natural experiments or RCTs are rare.

The distributions of categories of methods by donor are shown in Table IV.10. IIE fellows and World Bank researchers are more likely than others to have used experimental and pseudo-experimental methods. Papers funded by the European partners (particularly RCN and ESRC) are the most likely of the donors to have used qualitative methods.

IV.B.5. What Is the Quality of Research Done Under PopPov, as Judged by the Types of Publications That Have Resulted?

To address this question, we have documented where PopPov research has been published (for example, whether the research has been published in outlets that are likely to engage economists in population issues, such as economic journals). To assess *potential* influence, we have looked at the IFs of the journals in which the research is published.

Table IV.9
Methods Used in Papers Based on PopPov Research

Method	Number of Papers
Experimental or pseudo-experimental	60
Instrumental variable	43
Natural experiment	2
RCT	12
Regression discontinuity	3
Standard approach	85
Crosstab	14
OLS regression	50
Propensity-score matching	5
Difference-in-differences	16
Theory or simulation	38
Simulation	11
Theoretical	5
Qualitative analysis	22
Other	77
Multilevel analysis	10
Multiple methods	12
Other	39
Unknown	16

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: If more than one method was used, both are counted.

PopPov research has been published in some prestigious journals, e.g., *The Lancet* (two articles) and *The American Economic Review* (four articles). Appendix C lists the journals in which PopPov research has been published and shows the discipline that each addresses primarily. Table IV.11 summarizes this information. Of the 68 journal articles based on PopPov research, 17 (25 percent) were published in economics journals; this is low for a program that sought to rebuild the field of economic demography and for which the majority of those funded are economists, although we note that a higher percentage (50 percent) of papers reported to be under journal review are at economics journals.⁹ One-quarter of published articles based on PopPov research appear in demographic, FP, or RH journals. Although this makes sense because the projects address the intersection of demographic and RH issues and economic

⁹ Of 16 papers reported to be under journal review for which the journal was specified, eight are under review at economics journals. The higher percentage for this category than for published papers may reflect a longer time to prepare papers for such journals or a longer review time. Of course, it is possible that not all of these papers will ultimately be published in economics journals.

Table IV.10
Distribution of Papers, by Funder and Type of Method

Funder	Type of Method					Total
	Experimental or Pseudo-Experimental	Standard Approach	Theory or Simulation	Qualitative Analysis	Other or Unknown	
Fellow	30 (25%)	32 (27%)	6 (5%)	6 (5%)	44 (37%)	118 (100%)
PRB dissertation	1 (5%)	10 (48%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	8 (38%)	21 (100%)
IIE fellow	29 (30%)	22 (23%)	5 (5%)	5 (5%)	36 (37%)	97 (100%)
U.S.-based research-grant donor	21 (26%)	32 (40%)	7 (9%)	3 (4%)	17 (21%)	80 (100%)
Hewlett Foundation	3 (18%)	7 (41%)	3 (18%)		4 (24%)	17 (100%)
PRB	11 (28%)	13 (33%)	4 (11%)	2 (5%)	9 (23%)	39 (100%)
World Bank	7 (29%)	12 (50%)		1 (4%)	4 (17%)	24 (100%)
European partner	9 (15%)	21 (34%)	3 (5%)	13 (21%)	15 (25%)	61 (100%)
AFD	2 (22%)	5 (56%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)		9 (100%)
ESRC	3 (21%)	4 (29%)		3 (21%)	4 (29%)	14 (100%)
NWO-WOTRO	1 (10%)	6 (60%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	10 (100%)
RCN	3 (11%)	6 (21%)	1 (4%)	8 (29%)	10 (36%)	28 (100%)
Total	60 (23%)	85 (33%)	16 (6%)	22 (9%)	76 (29%)	259 (100%)

SOURCE: EDPP.

NOTE: Percentages are of row totals. Because of rounding, percentages might not sum precisely.

Table IV.11
Number of Journal Articles and Average Impact Factor, by Discipline of Audience

Main Disciplinary Audience for Journal	Articles	Articles in Journals That Have IFs	Average Two-Year IF for These Journals
Economics	17 (25%)	15	2.12
Demography, FP, and RH	17 (25%)	14	2.66
Health and medicine	18 (26%)	11	6.12
Other	16 (23%)	12	2.30
All	68 (100%)	52	3.50

SOURCE: EDPP.

ones, this is largely “preaching to the converted” because readers of these journals already appreciate the importance of demographic factors. Just over one-quarter of the papers were published in medical or health-related journals, and just under one-quarter were published in other types of journals, largely those of other social science disciplines.

Table IV.11 also shows the average two-year IFs for the journals in which PopPov research has been published. It is important to keep in mind that IFs are designed to rate the importance of a journal *within its field*. The fact that health-related PopPov research is published in journals with quite large IFs may mainly reflect the fact that articles in health journals are more widely cited than those for other disciplines.¹⁰

IV.B.6. Summary for Evaluation Question 2

To sum up regarding EQ.2, an impressive number of papers—259—have been written based on research funded by PopPov; 40 percent of these have been published in journals or as book chapters or are under journal review. However, less than half (46 percent) of papers prepared for PopPov are on the questions regarding the effects of demographic variables on economic outcomes that motivated the development of PopPov, and more than one-third look at topics outside the scope of the four PopPov research questions. PopPov research has been published in some prestigious journals. However, only 25 percent of the published articles are in economics journals; as noted earlier, this is low for a program that sought to rebuild the field of economic demography and for which the majority of those funded are economists.

When asked about the most-important research contributions of the PopPov initiative, survey respondents and key informants mentioned research on economic effects of fertility, particularly research on the DD and simulation effects of fertility on economic growth; research on natural experiments of the impact of shifts in FP access; and research using RCTs. However, many survey respondents and key informants showed a lack of awareness of PopPov’s research contributions.

Consistently with the CGD working group’s recommendation, more than 100 of the papers prepared for PopPov have used panel data. Eight respondents reported that they used data from RCTs or experiments. Sixteen projects reported doing original data collection

¹⁰ For example, the average of median IFs across all fields of health and medical journals is 1.73, compared with 1.12 across all demography, FP, and RH journals and 1.05 across all economics journals.

(whether quantitative or qualitative). However, the analytic method used most often is OLS regression—a method that the CGD working-group report implicitly criticized as not being good for inferring causality. The next-most used method is instrumental variables, which is one of the methods recommended by the CGD working group.

IV.C. Evaluation Question 3: How and to What Extent Did PopPov Investments Yield Policy-Relevant and Influential Research?

There are six subquestions to this question:

- EQ.3.1. To what extent has PopPov research addressed questions with potential policy relevance? Have the studies generated policy-relevant findings? Have the investigators made an effort to draw out the policy implications of their research in their papers and presentations?
- EQ.3.2. What PopPov research has had (or has the potential to have) the “highest impact”? What types of impact have resulted or may be possible?
- EQ.3.3. Have grantees published in outlets and formats likely to reach policymakers (e.g., articles in popular media, production of policy briefs) or made efforts to communicate the policy-relevant results of their research directly to policymakers?
- EQ.3.4. How have PRB and other PopPov partners helped disseminate the policy-relevant findings of PopPov research?
- EQ.3.5. Are potential stakeholders aware of PopPov research? If so, has it influenced their decisionmaking?
- EQ.3.6. Were PopPov’s assumptions correct about who would make credible sources of information for key decisionmakers, which inform investment and partnership decisions?

Our overall framework for addressing policy relevance and influence is based on the recent literature on impact assessment of policy-oriented research—in particular, studies produced by the CGIAR consortium of international agricultural research institutions and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).¹¹ The CGIAR Science Council (2006) notes that there are three sequential steps in the path from policy-oriented research to impacts (adapting slightly from their definitions):

1. Diffusion or dissemination: the dissemination of policy outputs and awareness of research among potential users in the policymaking process
2. Influence or policy response: the degree to which policy outputs alter policymakers’ perceptions or conceptions or change outcomes of the policymaking process
3. Impact: the consequential economic (or other) impacts on producers and consumers from identified policy changes.

¹¹ These include the Impact Assessment Discussion Paper series produced by IFPRI, studies by the CGIAR Science Council Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, and studies by ACIAR, which has produced the ACIAR Impact Assessment Series on this topic. For a summary of this literature, see Linder (2011) and CGIAR Science Council (2006).

This also fits into (and influenced) our overall view of this as a supply chain in which people have to conduct relevant research that then needs to be communicated.

The question “How and to what extent did the PopPov investments yield policy-relevant and influential research?” could encompass all three steps but primarily involves the first two. The third step moves beyond influence on decisionmaking to impacts of that decisionmaking. This is the hardest of the three steps to assess, and these types of assessments remain relatively rare (Linder, 2011). Given the relative newness of PopPov research, we would not expect such research, even if it progressed successfully through step 2, to have measurable effects on economic or welfare outcomes yet.

As a prior step, before considering dissemination and influence, we ask whether the work was *policy-relevant*—i.e., did the work address issues of direct relevance for policy and for policymakers? In assessing policy relevance, we have drawn on the reports by Barbara Seligman (2011, 2012) that identify policy-relevant results and products from PopPov research available as of early 2012. The purpose of Seligman’s evaluations was to assess “the policy relevance and application of research undertaken with support from the Pop/Pov Initiative, so that it may be translated into opportunities for progress on the advocacy agenda” (Seligman, 2011). As part of her 2011 report, Seligman developed the Policy Relevance Assessment Tool (PRAT), which ranks PopPov based on such factors as methodological rigor, asking a policy-relevant question, using recent data, contribution to the field, near-term implications, and providing clear policy recommendations. The top-scoring papers show the following characteristics: About half of them address how the organization of RH services affects their effectiveness (i.e., they do not have a link to economic outcomes, which are relevant to the PopPov agenda). Conditional cash transfer (CCT) studies that were scored high on PRAT either did not address a PopPov research question or did not lead to results on the original question asked. These findings cloud the usefulness of the scorecard used because, from the perspective of the current evaluation, only research on what we call PopPov issues—questions at the core of the PopPov agenda—can have meaningful policy impact. An unsurprising finding of the 2012 Seligman report is that those projects at a more mature stage in their project cycle and that therefore had time to work out their methodologies (and even get published) were generally higher scored. Papers coming out from U.S. calls for papers generally scored higher on PRAT than those funded by the European donors.

We also rely on responses from our survey and our key-informant interviews, in which we asked about papers and projects that respondents perceived as particularly policy-relevant.

The potential audience for PopPov research is diverse; it includes academic researchers, donor agencies and lending institutions, foundations, NGOs and advocacy groups, and governments of low-income countries. These groups are likely to be differentially influenced by PopPov research output and are likely to have differential influence over policy. For example, of the groups just listed, academic audiences are most likely to be aware (hence influenced in their own work) by PopPov output, which is intended to be scholarly research. On the other hand, this group generally has, at best, only indirect influence on policy. At the other end of the spectrum, policymakers, such as finance ministers and ministers of health, have the most influence over population-related policy in their countries but also might, without specific efforts to reach them, have the lowest awareness of PopPov (and other pertinent) research. Such policymakers are likely to be largely influenced by work conducted in their own countries. This will tend to limit the overall impact of PopPov in a specific country because, for many countries, there may be no or only one or two studies pertaining to that country. Further, the bulk

of these studies are not high-profile evaluations of programs in which the government has been involved—i.e., the types of results that are likely to catch the most attention locally.

By contrast, decisionmakers at donor agencies and foundations, which are international in the scope of their lending and advising activities, are more likely to take note of the overall (cross-country) body of PopPov work. Therefore, this audience is likely to score high both in terms of awareness or susceptibility to be influenced by the research and in their ability to influence policy—although, in the case of the latter, presumably not as influential as policy-makers in the countries themselves. So, although our evaluation considers impacts of research on different audiences, our expectations for both the effects on these audiences and, in turn, effects on policies or decisions over which they have control will differ by audience and need to be realistic.

A third important concern with respect to measuring influence is timing, similar to the time issue of long publication delays mentioned earlier. A number of studies funded by the program have not gone through the full publishing cycle so have not yet achieved whatever notoriety and influence they may ultimately achieve.

With these important considerations in mind, we turn to findings for each of the subquestions.

IV.C.1. To What Extent Has PopPov Research Addressed Questions with Potential Policy Relevance? Have the Studies Generated Policy-Relevant Findings? Have the Investigators Made an Effort to Draw Out the Policy Implications of Their Research in Their Papers and Presentations?

The survey asked, “What do you think have been the most important policy questions addressed in your own PopPov-sponsored research?” Unfortunately, this question did not yield particularly useful responses because most respondents simply stated their research question in rather general terms rather than framing in terms of policy questions or issues facing a particular country. Typical responses were “evaluate the impact of a conditional cash transfers program,” “maternal and child health in African countries,” “the role of family planning and reproductive health policies in enhancing young women’s education,” and “the gap between maternal and child health recommendation and practice.” Such statements are likely not of practical relevance to a policymaker in a specific country and indicate, if anything, the separate worlds that researchers and policymakers inhabit; they suggest that, for academic researchers, policy relevance often is an afterthought of the research. Although one should perhaps not infer too much from responses to this single question, this pattern of responses underlines the importance of (1) having researchers think more concretely about policy implications and (2) “translating” the research findings and recommendations for policymakers.

When we looked at a random sample of papers prepared for PopPov, we were struck that some of them were very academic and gave no attention whatsoever to policy implications, even though they addressed issues clearly of policy relevance, such as the effect of a particular type of program. This is likely a reflection of the focus of PopPov on research rigor and highlights a major weakness of this approach. Academic researchers generally have little training in considering policy impact and have little incentive to focus on it in an academic publication because journals typically evaluate the papers they decide to publish based on academic merit alone and assign low priority to policy relevance.

Survey respondents were also asked about the main policy contributions of the PopPov program as a whole. Many answered that they were not sure (“I do not know. I would like

to know. If this has been publicized, I missed it”; “Varied. It is not visible enough”). Some answered that they were not sufficiently familiar with the other PopPov work to answer this question (“Not sufficiently familiar with specifics of other projects”). When asked about the most-important findings and policy implications from PopPov research funded by other donors (both other European donors and PRB), a staff member with one of the European partners responded, “We have insufficient knowledge of the outcomes of PopPov research funded by other donors to respond to this question.” Other survey answers were somewhat vague (“policy-relevant findings on global health”; “encouraged discussions between researchers and policy-makers”). In Section IV.B.2, we have noted some of the findings of PopPov research that survey respondents found to be particularly noteworthy; in some cases, the respondents specifically noted that they thought that the findings should be of interest to policymakers.

Several key informants noted that achieving a good balance between scientific rigor and policy relevance was a tricky issue. Although many grantees were perceived as not being able to fully achieve this goal, the group at Harvard around David Bloom and David Canning of Harvard working on the DD was singled out by a key-informant respondent at a partner organization as having struck the best balance at having produced scientifically sound *and* policy-relevant results. Though this line of work was started by these authors long before the inception of PopPov, as evidenced by publications on this topic starting in 1998 (e.g., Bloom and Williamson, 1998; Bloom, Canning, and Sevilla, 2003), Canning commented to us that Hewlett Foundation support was “really important” in enabling the group to continue work on the fertility side of the DD story and that “everything from 2005 on fertility is related to Hewlett funding.”¹² Indeed, publications on this topic by the key authors (and by other authors using this concept) increased significantly during the time that the Harvard group received PopPov funding. Furthermore, PopPov provided a forum at which this work could be disseminated and discussed, formally through presentations and informally through collaborations and discussions among PopPov members. We already mentioned the collaboration between Canning and T. Paul Schultz of Yale that was a direct consequence of their discussions at PopPov conferences.

One informant, a senior researcher originally from SSA, thought that Steven Radelet’s (2010) book, *Emerging Africa: How 17 Countries Are Leading the Way*, may have played a role in renewing interest in population issues, as may have the attention that the Arab Spring drew to the potential effects of youth bulges. It therefore seems that PopPov research is becoming available when it has good potential to resonate with a range of policymakers.

IV.C.2. What PopPov Research Has Had (or Has the Potential to Have) the Highest Impact? What Types of Impact Have Resulted or May Be Possible?

As already noted, several key informants mentioned the work of Bloom and Canning and associates at Harvard on the DD as being highly influential in raising the attention of policymakers to population issues. Hilary Standing’s research on the economic consequences of unsafe abortion was also mentioned by several key informants as being highly influential,¹³ as was Joseph Babigumira’s work on the same topic in Uganda. It was noted that this research has led Ipas and the Guttmacher Institute to get grants, e.g., from DFID, to field surveys to

¹² The Harvard group has had other funding to work on the aging side of the story.

¹³ This work was funded directly by the Hewlett Foundation to IDS and is not covered in the SOPP report or otherwise covered in this report.

study this issue further. If, as is likely, these studies enter significantly into policy discussion on this issue, PopPov research will have played a significant catalytic role in this discussion and resulting policies.

ESRC staff reported that several of the ESRC-funded projects have already had an impact. The project Enhancing the Economic, Health and Social Capabilities of Highly Vulnerable Youth

succeeded in influencing policy about providing financial skills education as part of the lifeskills program at the national level. The intervention is being reviewed for uptake by the South African DOE [Department of Education] in KwaZulu-Natal as part of [its] mandated Life-Orientation Curriculum, and by the South African [Ministry] of Cooperative Governance [and Traditional Affairs] as part of [its] Community Work Programme to improve well-being. (untitled anonymous document emailed by Lyndy Griffin to the authors August 2, 2013)

They also noted that “the [KwaZulu-Natal] DOE is eager to expand the reach of the programme in South Africa, and discussions are on-going about scaling up of the intervention.”

ESRC staff commented that the project they supported called The Effects of Obstetric Complications and Their Costs on the Long-Term Economic and Social Well-Being of Women and Their Families in Burkina Faso achieved

economic and societal impact . . . through collaborating with Amnesty International (AI) in [its] on-going campaign for maternal mortality reduction in Burkina Faso. This enabled the team to reach high-level politicians. . . . In 2010, Amnesty International obtained a declaration from the president that user fees for maternity care would be fully lifted. The evidence of deleterious effects of complications on poverty convinced AI and then politicians of the importance of doing something. The research team believed that this was a major reason that our collaboration with our partners in Burkina Faso was shortlisted for a [prize] with Times Higher [Education] Supplement in 2010.

Jan Monteverde Haakonsen of ECONPOP commented,

It is a bit early to talk about policy implications at this time, but [ECONPOP] has helped [direct the] attention [of] Norwegian development policy makers that there are interesting results from research that links population, economics health and poverty. In this regard, it was particularly important to have the last POPPOV-conference here in Oslo as it provided us with the opportunity to invite high government officials and expose them to the theme.

A World Bank researcher who worked on PopPov commented that he thought that the work had reenergized a discussion about demographic issues in Africa and mentioned a large regional study whose results were due out in December 2013. He also noted that the World Bank’s Adolescent Girls Initiative (see World Bank, undated) (and implications of adolescents’ demographic decisions for, e.g., economic growth, poverty) has been a growing work program at the World Bank and that the Hewlett Foundation–supported research has been part of the evidence base for that focus.

However, a senior demographer with many years of experience working at a large international organization commented that, in general, PopPov research has tended to be esoteric and does not translate into policy action.

IV.C.3. Have Grantees Published in Outlets and Formats Likely to Reach Policymakers (e.g., Articles in Popular Media, Production of Policy Briefs) or Made Efforts to Communicate the Policy-Relevant Results of Their Research Directly to Policymakers?

To address this question, we looked at where PopPov research has been published and where it has been presented. As noted in Section IV.B, PopPov research has been published in 68 journal articles and seven book chapters, and, as of July 2013, 28 papers were under review at journals. Appendix C shows the journals in which PopPov research has been published. Some of the research is published in highly regarded international journals that have high IFs (e.g., *The Lancet*). However, even though some of the journal publications presenting PopPov work may not have high or any IFs, these journals may reach the right target audiences. Examples of this include publications on PopPov research in *Ghana Medical Journal*, *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, and *Journal of African Economies*. Policymakers may be more attuned to journals in their home countries (and, in a few cases, potentially in their own languages) than to globally leading ones. The latter may report findings from many countries other than that of the policymaker and hence may be perceived as being less relevant or applicable and less read locally by either academics or officials. We noted in Section IV.A.3 that PopPov research has been presented in a large number of international forums, some of which, e.g., Women Deliver, are likely to be attended by policymakers and advocates, although most are mainly academic in nature.

More-concrete information emerges from answers to the survey question about whether and what kinds of outreach efforts were made. Seven of the 52 fellow and PI survey respondents to Part 2 of the survey indicated that they had contacted the press; eight said that they publicized their work using blogs; eight had reached out to NGOs; and ten had contact with government. Two respondents indicated having reached out to advocacy groups. Other outreach activities mentioned were policy briefs, seminar presentations, and project websites. Because multiple responses were possible, this translates into a total of 27 (52 percent) out of 52 respondents having done some outreach. The percentages were much higher for PIs of research grants (13 out of 17 PIs—76 percent) than for fellows (14 out of 32 fellows—44 percent), suggesting that PopPov has been correct in trying to help fellows learn how to draw out policy implications and communicate with policymakers.

When responding to the next survey question, on the success of these outreach activities, most did not claim very much: They either stated that outreach was not successful (“Outreach to the Ministry of Health was not successful”), judged success in terms of impact on their own research rather than policymaking (“Yes, we got nice comments from the blog that fed into research”), or thought that the impact was difficult to determine (“Very hard to measure . . . policy change is not likely the consequence of a single academic study”). A sociologist/demographer PI from North America answered, “Moderately successful—although our results have been circulated, it is not clear what policy changes have been made.”

However, several survey respondents had a more positive view, as evidenced by such statements as, “Successful because policymakers from the Ministry of Health and NGO are active and are willing to use the results on their policies and interventions” (from a demographer PI from Francophone SSA). Key-informant interviews with researchers and others provided some examples of productive communication with policymakers. Frederick Mugisha, who is with the Ministry of Finance in Uganda, said that T. Paul Schultz’s research and that of Germano

Mwabu on the effects of population dynamics on health care¹⁴ and the Bloom and David Canning of Harvard work on the DD influenced the planning process in Uganda and elsewhere within the continent, particularly Burundi. Considering population issues is ingrained in the planning function of the ministry (where money is allocated) but not in the finance or economic management functions. He is trying to bring these various groups together. He is trying to show what the population structure will look like under different scenarios and what the implications would be for GDP. Mugisha commented that PopPov has enabled people working on these issues to get together and get to know one another. PopPov has put him in touch with such people as Schultz and other senior researchers who help complete and reinforce the narrative. Jotham Musinguzi, the director of the Africa Regional Office of Partners in Population and Development, said that he feels that PopPov is looking at the right topics. He noted that he has twice brought ministers of finance to PopPov conferences and that they have “found participating very useful.” He commented, “Anything that linked Reproductive health/family planning with economic development was always of interest to them!”

And some projects have made strong efforts at dissemination. Jan Monteverde Haakonsen of ECONPOP noted,

Several of the [RCN-funded] projects have had intense dissemination campaigns in the countries where the research has been conducted, including meetings and workshops aimed at informing officials on both local and national levels. One fact sheet with a popularized summary has been produced from one project, other[s] are in the pipeline.

Nonetheless, a number of key informants felt that PopPov’s biggest weakness has been in communication with policymakers. Most researchers at the annual PopPov conferences focus on communicating to their peers, so their presentations are not very appropriate for policymakers. As one senior key informant noted, “for reaching policymakers it is not sufficient just to add a slide on policy implications at the end of an otherwise-quite-technical presentation.”

IV.C.4. How Have PRB and Other PopPov Partners Helped Disseminate the Policy-Relevant Findings of PopPov Research?

We have noted in several places in this report the inherent tension between commissioning high-quality research from top academic researchers and finding ways to communicate these findings effectively to policymakers. In the preceding sections, we investigated the extent to which the researchers *themselves* made attempts to communicate their findings. However, it is not clear that this is the comparative advantage of academics, who often shy away from policy discussions. Recognizing this, as noted in Section II.B.4, PopPov set up a system to translate these academic findings into a format that is attractive to policymakers and, more generally, to arrange for activities to communicate academic findings to policymakers.

PRB and other PopPov partners have undertaken activities to help disseminate the findings of PopPov research:

- PRB staff members have made several presentations about PopPov in SSA. PRB organized a session on PopPov research at the 2011 International Conference on Family Plan-

¹⁴ Mwabu is with AERC, which received one of the early direct grants from the Hewlett Foundation; he attended the first three PopPov conferences but has not attended since.

ning in Dakar. James Gribble of PRB drew on PopPov research in his presentations on the DD to the African Union Commission meeting of ministers responsible for youth in Addis Ababa in September 2012 and later at the joint annual meeting of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in March 2013 in Abidjan.

- Several of the PopPov conferences have had sessions devoted to policy issues (e.g., Marseilles, Cape Town, Accra).
- PRB has issued six research briefs that summarize key findings of PopPov research (these are posted on the PopPov website), and two more are in process.¹⁵ (The PopPov website and the research briefs are discussed in more detail in Sections IV.D.5 and IV.D.6.)
- There has also been dissemination to the media: Marlene Lee of PRB was interviewed on South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) radio in South Africa about the brief “Human Capital Consequences of Teenage Childbearing.” Lee and Wendy Baldwin (then president of PRB) promoted PopPov research in *The Economist*.¹⁶
- In addition, PRB has prepared a report on SOPP (Lee and Belohlav, 2013), which summarizes the findings from PopPov research; it will be posted to the PopPov website. In addition, PRB has fed PopPov research results into other PRB projects, e.g., Informing Decisionmakers to Act (IDEA).
- In October 2013, the French NGO Equilibres et Populations and IRD and AFD cohosted a conference in Ouagadougou at which the findings of DEMTREN research were presented. The research results were then to be presented to AFD staff in Paris.
- Jan Monteverde Haakonsen of ECONPOP is working with a media person to help prepare fact sheets about ECONPOP research.
- WOTRO grantee Pieter Hooimeijer gave a talk about his research to people at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- WOTRO has issued a policy brief, “Breaking the Cycle,” about Hooimeijer’s PopPov research in Rwanda in its Research for Global Development series (Hooimeijer and Kabano, 2012).
- A policy brief “Siyakha Nentsha: Building Economic, Health, and Social Capabilities Among Highly Vulnerable Adolescents in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa” (Hallman and

¹⁵ The six briefs are

- Mahesh Karra and Marlene Lee, “Human Capital Consequences of Teenage Childbearing in South Africa,” Washington, D.C.: PRB, April 2012a
- Karra and Lee, “The Effects of an Economic Crisis on Contraceptive Use,” Washington, D.C.: PRB, August 2012b
- Karra and Lee, “The Economics of Reproductive Health in Accra, Ghana,” Washington, D.C.: PRB, September 2012c
- Mahesh Karra and James N. Gribble, “Costs of Induced Abortion and Cost-Effectiveness of Universal Access to Modern Contraceptives in Uganda,” Washington, D.C.: PRB, September 2012
- Mia Foreman and Marlene Lee, “Beyond Maternal Mortality: Surviving an Obstetric Complication in Burkina Faso,” Washington, D.C.: PRB, August 2012
- Shareen Joshi, “Reproductive Health and Economic Development: What Connections Should We Focus On?” Washington, D.C.: PRB, May 2012.

¹⁶ Research results from three PopPov studies were in used in a Feast and Famine blog post on *The Economist* (J. P., 2012a) and in an article in the journal’s *Free Exchange* blog (J. P., 2012b), and in an article in the *Free Exchange* section of the print edition of the journal (“Baby Monitor,” 2012).

Roca, 2011) has been prepared on one of the ESRC-supported projects. It has been disseminated through the Population Council's website.

Key-informant interviews commented that the PopPov conferences have varied in the extent to which they have involved policymakers. Several interviewees cited the Arusha and Marseilles conferences as the ones that made the greatest effort to include policymakers.

Hence, PRB and other PopPov partners have engaged in activities to try to publicize the results of PopPov research through a range of modalities. However, in some cases, there appears to have been little direct involvement in these efforts of the researchers whose names and reputations were supposed to open doors. Assessments of the success of the efforts at policy communication through the conferences, website, and research briefs are discussed in Sections IV.D.4 through IV.D.6.

IV.C.5. Are Potential Stakeholders Aware of PopPov Research? If So, Has It Influenced Their Decisionmaking?

In the preceding subsections on EQ.3, we discussed the activities undertaken to communicate the research to policymakers. In this subsection, we attempt to evaluate whether the activities have resulted in an increased awareness of PopPov-related tissues on the part of policymakers and whether this has led to policies reflecting this increased awareness. We have also given some examples of impact in Section IV.C.2.

Our key-informant interviews revealed remarkably low awareness of PopPov by people outside the network. At the PAA annual meeting in April 2013, we were struck by the lack of awareness about PopPov even by researchers and directors of population research and communication and advocacy organizations who have long worked in the population field but have not been directly involved in the PopPov program. The low awareness by people attuned to these issues calls into question whether policymakers, who arguably are much further removed from the realm of population research, have been effectively influenced (because awareness is a necessary, though not sufficient, step toward a change in RH policymaking). A high-level UN researcher and official and a prominent academic in demography with a career-long involvement with FP each knew very little about PopPov, and several other individuals deeply involved in FP research and operations had only a vague familiarity with it. The leader of a communication and advocacy organization had heard of PopPov but was not aware enough to know of any study findings that the organization might have been able to use in its advocacy efforts. The leader of another such organization was not familiar with the term *PopPov* but had attended some meetings about it in conjunction with the PAA annual meeting in the early years of the initiative. He said that he found the materials that PRB produces to be useful but did not know whether any of them were from PopPov. He did not receive emails about PopPov accomplishments or activities. We also found that most people not directly involved in PopPov but at least somewhat aware of the program view it as a program completely focused on economists. The low awareness of the initiative among people or groups who should be key stakeholders of the research is disappointing and suggests a need for greater, more-targeted efforts to provide relevant information to relevant audiences. We noted earlier that, when asked about important findings and policy implications from PopPov research funded by other donors, a key staff member of one of the European partner organizations responded that he had insufficient knowledge of the outcomes of PopPov research funded by other donors to respond to this question.

As part of our effort to assess the influence of PopPov research on the actual decisionmaking of stakeholders (which is conditional, of course, on their being aware of the research), we conducted interviews with several current and former staff of the World Bank. There is some difference of opinion within this group on whether PopPov research has influenced the attention given to population issues at the World Bank. One senior researcher who was involved in the World Bank's research for PopPov mentioned the World Bank's Reproductive Health Action Plan (World Bank, 2010), which was approved by the World Bank's board three years ago, as an example of increasing support at the World Bank. (The World Bank had been involved in RH issues in the 1980s but had not had an RH strategy for around two decades.) This informant felt that the World Bank's PopPov research and other PopPov research were important in leading to this change; the informant specifically mentioned research by David Weil and Andrew Foster of Brown (though this research is not specifically cited in the action plan). Another senior demographer at the World Bank, however, felt that the research done at the World Bank for PopPov played no role in the World Bank's RH strategy (which was instead, according to him, the result of a push in that direction from some World Bank directors, particularly Norwegians, who felt that RH was missing from the World Bank's health, nutrition, and population strategy).

Another World Bank researcher opined,

I suspect [that] the Hewlett work could have been disseminated more within the [World Bank], but there was no leadership/push for that (my opinion)—which is not uncommon for research programs. In general, I think researchers under-advertise our work to non-researchers (i.e., operations staff in the [World Bank] and other places).

Gerrie Tuitert, the director of PopDev, the Dutch part of PopPov, commented that PopDev may have contributed to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs taking a broader view to include population, instead of only sexual and RH; by word of ministry staff, in 2012, they thought it necessary to find ways whereby they could make it easier for colleagues in other departments to grasp the links with the other priority themes such as food security. One of the PopDev project leaders was invited to present a lunchtime lecture for all interested staff at the ministry.

A senior demographer who worked with a large international organization recommended that it would be useful to have (more) PopPov research presented at forums, such as Women Deliver, which has a communication arm and outreach to policymakers.

IV.C.6. Were the Assumptions Made by PopPov Correct About Who Would Make Credible Sources of Information for Key Decisionmakers, Which Inform Investment and Partnership Decisions?

It was assumed that ministers of finance in developing countries and decisionmakers at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund would listen to economic arguments by economists; European decisionmakers to European researchers; and African decisionmakers to evidence based on research in local contexts. Our key-informant interviews and responses to our survey generally supported these assumptions.

Several informants noted the value of economic research and economist spokespeople for reaching ministers of finance and others interested in economic issues. A leading population official at USAID felt that macro arguments, such as the DD, are most useful for reach-

ing ministers of finance (whereas family-level arguments [i.e., micro studies] are more effective with ministers of health). Researchers at the World Bank commented that “higher-ups” at the World Bank want to hear from economists rather than demographers on issues related to population. A senior-economist grantee said that he thinks that randomized interventions would provide the type of evidence that would convince senior people at the World Bank. Bloom and Canning of Harvard, who have made presentations about their DD research at the annual meetings of the World Economic Forum, feel that this audience has been very receptive to the DD message. They noted that the DD issue has been covered at every recent meeting of the forum.¹⁷ It is plausible that the level of receptivity with this audience reflects the fact that the DD approach was developed by economists and has implications that are firmly (macro) economic. The director of a large population-research organization commented that he feels that World Bank affiliation helps open doors, and Frederick Mugisha (Ministry of Finance in Uganda) commented that African policymakers are likely to listen to senior economists.

Our interviews also emphasized the importance of local spokespeople. A demographer with career-long experience in the population field opined that having a developing-country collaborator can help in reaching local audiences, citing the example of a recent meeting he had with policymakers in Pakistan, where he felt that it greatly helped that they brought with them a Pakistani demographer who was well-known and highly regarded by the audience. The assumption that African policymakers are most likely to be receptive to evidence based on research in local contexts and presented by African spokespeople was strongly endorsed by some other key informants we interviewed. Eliya Msiyaphazi Zulu, executive director of the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), an organization that focuses on translating research into policy in Africa, said that it was very important to take messages to the country level, which requires specific country-level analyses and engagement with end users of the evidence. He noted that AFIDEP is working with the World Bank in disseminating in Africa the findings from David Canning’s (World Bank) project on the DD in Africa and in trying to ignite the interest of young scholars in African universities on the topic. He also commented that, in order to effectively inform policy processes, it is important to keep an eye out for policy windows of opportunity and be poised to take advantage of them. Frederick Mugisha (Ministry of Finance in Uganda) commented, “When people like Cheikh Mbacké [a respected African demographer] speak, people listen.”

A leading senior U.S. demographer emphasized the importance of country buy-in and working with people in the country. He cited the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) project as a useful model for this. That project has successfully brought in partner research institutions from 40 countries, including five in SSA.¹⁸ NTA has annual conferences, each of which has a specific thematic focus; this (along with possibly some formal links to NTA) is something that PopPov may want to consider.

The PI of one of the PopPov projects for one the European partner organizations commented,

[R]esearchers in a certain country better know their way around to policymakers/NGOs of relevance, have their connections and easier access, and that this indeed will facilitate com-

¹⁷ See Zlotnik, Jimenez, and Bloom (2012); also see World Economic Forum (2012).

¹⁸ Vogler, undated. Interestingly, the most recent *National Transfer Accounts Bulletin* (No. 5) is titled “Lower-Income Countries and the Demographic Dividend” (2012). For general information on NTA, see NTA (undated).

munication and sharing. In addition, I expect decision-makers to be receptive too to the voice of renowned international experts, from whatever country, or renowned institutions, and naturally also to the voice from local experts in Africa.

William P. Butz, the former director of PRB who spent the past two years based in Vienna, commented,

There is no question that European policymakers are more likely to pay attention to European than U.S. researchers. The day when the “authority” of a U.S. expert carried the day just because he/she is an American is over in most of the social sciences.

Informants emphasized the importance of keeping in mind one’s audience (and the issues in which it is interested). A senior researcher originally from SSA commented that he had attended some meetings designed to inform ministers of finance but that the presentations were not appropriate for this audience: “When speaking to Ministers of Finance, you need to begin with their reality.” A World Bank official said that he felt that ministers of finance are interested in demographics mainly because they are worried about youth problems (and potential instability), so youth—and their economic situation as affected by population—is a good hook for getting their attention. Informants at USAID and the World Bank commented that leaders at the World Bank tend to be skeptical about arguments for *public* funding of FP; they felt that research that assesses the extent to which FP is a public good could be persuasive.

In addition to the key-informant interviews, in our survey, we asked respondents about the type of institution or type of policymaker they felt PopPov research has influenced most. The World Bank was mentioned most often (five times), followed by health ministries and (international) funders (each three times), and academic institutions (twice). Again, many people did not know how to reply to this question, as evidenced by a large fraction (37 out of 52 respondents) who chose not to respond to this question at all or who responded “don’t know.”

IV.C.7. Summary for Evaluation Question 3

To sum up regarding EQ.3, we receive a mixed picture when trying to evaluate the policy impact of PopPov-funded research. PopPov seemed to be correct in its assumptions *about who would make credible sources of information for key decisionmakers* (ministers of finance in developing countries and decisionmakers at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund would listen to economic arguments by economists; European decisionmakers to European researchers; and African decisionmakers to evidence based on research in local contexts). However, the research often lacked findings of interest to policymakers; where results were policy-relevant, sometimes others (e.g., staff at PRB) were the “spokespeople” rather than the scholars who did the research.

The RFP for this evaluation noted,

A second aim [of PopPov] was to generate research findings that could be translated into program and policy recommendations for near-term use. Specifically, there was an expectation among some stakeholders that the research findings would increase attention by eco-

conomic policymakers about the value of lowering the rate of population growth and investing in family planning.¹⁹

Although there are notable exceptions, it seems that relatively few researchers assigned a high priority for translating their research into policy messages or presenting their findings at forums likely to be attended by policymakers. Moreover, many of the research projects did not address questions related to the value of lowering the rate of population growth or investing in FP. PopPov's presumption that policy impact was to be derived from academic publications may need reconsideration. Academic researchers have little incentive (and little training) to draw out policy implications of their work. More worrying (because the translation of research findings for policymakers could be done with appropriate resources) is that many researchers did not necessarily start with policy-relevant questions but were typically guided by such factors as data availability and sophistication of statistical methodology that determine "publishability" in a high-caliber academic journal (and these were valued in the proposal-review process). The strategy of giving relatively broad academic freedom in the topics addressed and subsequently translating the findings so derived has the advantage of being attractive to (and therefore attracting) many researchers, aiding in field-building. However, it seems very likely that this approach led, in turn, to relatively few papers with findings that are interesting for policymakers, even if the findings are "translated" for them; the problem is not one of language but one of evidence created that is heavily tilted toward academic but not policy relevance. Consequently, although it is difficult to judge PopPov's actual policy impact, awareness among policymakers is likely low because we found that even key people in the RH field and staff of a PopPov partner organization were not, or were to only a very limited extent, familiar with PopPov and its research findings. Many who could potentially use PopPov findings in their policy, communication, or advocacy work have little, if any, awareness of it. Although one of the goals of the program was to support research that would be relevant for policy, it is not clear that this objective received as much weight as it should have in making decisions about funding. In general, the research projects funded by the European partners have made more effort to involve local collaborators and to involve stakeholders in the process, thereby increasing the visibility and potential policy impact of the findings, although, as noted by Barbara Seligman and here earlier, the research funded by the Europeans was less likely to address the high-priority PopPov questions.

¹⁹ William P. Butz, the president of PRB when PopPov began, commented that one of his worries was that the donors were hoping for certain kinds of answers. He was happy that this did not color the conduct of the program.

IV.D. Evaluation Question 4: How Did the Design of PopPov Affect Its Ability to Build the Field, Expand the Evidence Base, and Inform Policies and Practices? How Did the Implementation of PopPov Contribute or Pose Challenges to Achieving These Outcomes?

To address these questions, in this section, we consider the following aspects of PopPov:

- EQ.4.1. The design of the grant program and the mechanisms that PopPov has used to solicit and review proposals for dissertation fellowships, research projects, and papers for presentation at the annual conferences
- EQ.4.2. The fellowship program
- EQ.4.3. The involvement of the European partner organizations and the World Bank
- EQ.4.4. The design and conduct of the annual PopPov conferences and associated activities
- EQ.4.5. The PopPov website
- EQ.4.6. Other dissemination products, such as research briefs and fact sheets
- EQ.4.7. Support provided by the program to researchers once they have been funded.

IV.D.1. The Design of the Grant Program and the Mechanisms That PopPov Has Used to Solicit and Review Proposals

The goal of the grant program was to support high-quality research on particular questions, with all proposals (except for the projects funded by direct grants from the Hewlett Foundation) reviewed by external, objective reviewers. The calls for applications were formulated in a relatively broad manner to encourage scholars doing cutting-edge research to submit proposals, i.e., to give them leeway in formulating their specific research questions. Similarly, the conferences sought to present such research, including some not funded by PopPov. Reviewers of applications submitted to PRB or IIE for research projects, fellowships, and conference presentations were largely, but not exclusively, researchers who have been active in the PopPov network. Top-notch researchers, including some originally from SSA, participated in the reviews of proposals submitted to PRB and IIE, and it appears that decisions were made based on scientific merit. A number of the projects funded are only loosely related to the PopPov research questions, and some are weak on policy relevance and relevance to SSA, despite the fact that all of these were mentioned as criteria to be considered by reviewers evaluating proposals (as noted in Section II.B.1). The European proposals were typically reviewed by an international team of researchers from the United States and Europe. For the joint call (and some earlier European calls), equal weight was to be given to scientific quality, relevance (of topic and to policy), and quality of collaboration, with the first being the most important in the case of a tie. Note that the evaluation criteria for the joint call (and earlier WOTRO call) gave considerable weight to the quality of collaboration, whereas this was not mentioned as a criterion for evaluation in the initial PRB calls. For some of the European reviews, some reviewers had social-sector and policy expertise, but the U.S. reviews typically had little, if any, involvement of people with policy experience. This may have inhibited achieving the goal of producing policy-relevant research in the U.S. rounds before 2012 because consultation with policymakers at this early stage may have produced more policy-relevant research topics.

As described earlier, the Hewlett Foundation initially made direct grants to several researchers, and the U.S. part of the first call by PRB was by invitation only. On the one hand,

most of the researchers so funded (e.g., T. Paul Schultz of Yale, David Canning of Harvard) probably would have done the research anyway. On the other hand, it did draw them into the network, and they have continued to be involved, e.g., attending nearly all of the annual PopPov conferences. All other calls were open, and, in 2012, the call for proposals was a joint call, with PRB and three of the European donors joining together to develop a common call. One interesting feature of the joint call was the requirement of the stakeholders' meetings, described earlier, whereby applicants invited to submit a revised proposal were required to meet with potential stakeholders in the country of study (and were given some funding to do so). This requirement did cause some timing problems. A senior demographer commented that it was difficult for him to schedule a visit on short notice to the country being studied given his university responsibilities. However, even researchers who initially were not enthusiastic about having to meet with potential stakeholders before submitting a revised proposal found the meetings useful. Several key informants commented that they felt that this increased stakeholder buy-in. A senior economist commented that the meetings were a bit awkward at the beginning because the researchers did not yet have funding but that now these stakeholders would be involved at various stages of the project and not just receive papers at the end. More generally, researchers welcomed the two-round process that provided (some of) them the opportunity to revise their proposals in response to reviewers' comments and resubmit them:²⁰

The two-round funding model where applicants had an opportunity to work to improve the application based on first-round funding was very successful. It encouraged everyone on the project to contribute more and get the work started even before we received second-round funding.

Several respondents to our online survey commented that the durations of their grants limited the types of research that they were able to do (e.g., regarding collection of longitudinal data). Another commented that the process put junior researchers at a disadvantage because "they are not able to build up local partners to the same extent as more established researchers"; this respondent suggested possible support for junior researchers ("Maybe there is room for facilitating the matching of possible partners?").

IV.D.2. The Fellowship Program

The goal of the fellowship program was to build up a new generation of researchers working on PopPov topics. At times, this has been expressed specifically as building the field of economic demography, though not all fellows worked on topics at the intersection of economics and demography. A subgoal of the fellowship program was to increase research capacity in SSA. However, as noted in Section IV.A.1, the fellowship program has found it difficult to get good applications from people studying in SSA. In addition to problems with quality, many of the proposals received from SSA were on topics unrelated to program goals. Also, the reference letters for these applicants are not as useful as those for other applicants; they tended to focus on character rather than on the research. At first, the applications from SSA were reviewed separately, with the goal of funding some applications from each pool, but that stopped after two

²⁰ It is important to keep in mind that we sent our survey only to people who successfully received funding. For legal reasons, the partners were not able to give us information about unsuccessful applicants, so we are not presenting their opinions about the proposal and review process.

years because of quality issues. IIE has tried to improve outreach through its office in Addis Ababa and by having a webinar and website on how to write an application. This did increase the number and quality of applications. Nonetheless, in 2010 and 2013, no doctoral students studying in SSA were selected for funding. Several senior-researcher key informants from SSA who have reviewed fellowship proposals reported feeling that PopPov needs to be more proactive in looking for good African students (and researchers), particularly economists.

Originally, there was a plan to provide formal mentoring for the fellows. Rachel Nugent (who was coordinator for PopPov in its early stages, while she was at PRB and CGD) said,

PRB planned that senior PopPov researchers would mentor the fellows through a simple match-making process based on common areas of research and willingness. It happened with about 2–3 of the fellows. It was something fellows always said they would like but, as with anything where there aren't natural incentives, it didn't happen easily. We offered senior researchers a small stipend to do it, I believe.

Some of the fellows naturally receive mentoring because they are at universities that have PopPov research grants and work on them, collaborating closely with the research-grant PIs. But many fellows are not at universities that have PopPov research grants.

At some of the earliest conferences, the Hewlett/PRB fellows met the day before the official conference began to share their research ideas with one another, and some senior researchers attended and gave feedback as well. However, this session was discontinued when IIE took over the training component (and, in fact, the Hewlett/PRB fellows were not automatically invited to the annual conferences again until 2013). The Hewlett/PRB fellows with whom we spoke in key-informant interviews all found those sessions to be very worthwhile and were sorry to see that they are no longer held. Some survey respondents made similar comments. Those sessions appear to have accomplished the mentoring and feedback function without the complications of setting up formal mentoring pairings, but a big drawback of the approach was that such mentoring took place only once a year.

One former Hewlett/PRB fellow commented that it would have been useful to participate in the PRB Policy Communication Fellows Program to learn more about how to communicate with policymakers. Several IIE fellows who are also PRB Policy Communication Fellows also thought that this would be useful for other IIE fellows.²¹

As mentioned in Section IV.A.1, in our online survey and in our key-informant interviews, the vast majority of respondents perceived the fellowship program as being a big contributor to PopPov's success, and several respondents to our survey had positive comments about it ("Fellowship program has been useful . . . it has attracted high quality researchers" [economist PI]; "The stipend helped me to focus on research rather than be a [teaching assistant], which tangibly helped me by focusing more on my work" [economist fellow]; "Providing two solid years of full funding was extremely helpful. It let me set an ambitious research agenda and put all my efforts into making it succeed. It's far more effective than small pots of fund-

²¹ One of these added,

I should put in the caveat that a two-week policy program seemed a bit of an over-kill to me. Many of the PRB fellows also felt the same way. I think compared to that, a couple of days or a week-long program may suit students lot better. Similarly, a Hewlett fellow was telling me that he saw the call for applications for the PRB fellowship, but he did not want to spend two weeks in DC right before the year he is looking for a job, and hence did not apply. Therefore, a shortened version may be appreciated more by everyone.

ing” [economist fellow]). However, several problems were also noted. One fellow commented in the survey, “I had additional funding to help with the collection of my qualitative data. It would have been very difficult to collect original data and support all of my expenses with the PopPov fellowship funding alone”), though another respondent explicitly said, “I believe funding is sufficient.” Lack of focused research orientation was also mentioned (“It is not clear what outcomes are desired”). Some respondents also felt that they were not clear about the organization of their fellowship program and that this had negative impacts on their ability to form a cohesive research network of fellows (“I had a hard time finding a way to connect with the rest of my cohort”; “I feel like the group is not as cohesive as it could be”; “I am not exactly sure how PopPov, Hewlett and IIE even fit together and how they are related to the fellowship”). In general, it seems that, although IIE appears to be doing an efficient job administering the fellowship program, the program is no longer as tightly linked to the rest of PopPov as it was when the fellowship program was administered by PRB. There were also comments about the way fellows were selected:

The selection process is not clear and it also does not involve past fellows, who should be on the selection committee. The inclusion of African researchers should not be the goal as there are other fellowships directly targeting African researchers.

Along the same lines, one fellow commented, “While I understand the preference for African researchers, it might be more productive for PopPov to focus on researchers from low-income countries to have a more global perspective.”

IV.D.3. The Involvement of the European Partner Organizations and the World Bank

Four European partner organizations were brought into PopPov to increase the global visibility of the initiative. A grant was made to the World Bank because it was thought that this would increase the salience of PopPov topics at the World Bank and that economic policymakers in developing countries would be especially likely to listen to economists at the World Bank. Bringing in these partner organizations also enabled leveraging Hewlett Foundation funding because these organizations contributed some of their own funds to the initiative. In this section, we assess the contributions of these partners’ involvement.

Each of the partner institutions has had a somewhat different focus. The SOPP report (Lee and Belohlav, 2013) summarizes these differences as follows:

The World Bank and PRB funded-projects emphasized economic analyses at the macro- and micro-levels, with several projects implementing experimental designs, including randomized controlled trials. The IRD-funded projects focused exclusively on researching demographic issues in Africa, involving a cadre of West African partners in the PopPov endeavor. The projects funded by the ESRC, NWO/WOTRO, and RCN included strong components of capacity building, with African master’s, Ph.D. candidates, and postdoctoral trainees playing significant roles in these research programs. (p. 11)

Along many dimensions, aspects of the projects funded by the European partners have been very consistent with PopPov goals—in some respects, more so than those funded by PRB or the World Bank. Almost all (20 of 22 = 91 percent) of the projects funded by the European donors are on SSA, compared with only 41 percent for those funded by Hewlett, PRB, or the World Bank (see Table IV.12); we also saw this earlier, in Table IV.7, in terms of papers. In

Table IV.12
Number of Research Projects and Number on Sub-Saharan Africa, by Funder

Funder	Number of Projects Funded	Number and Percentage of Projects on SSA ^a
U.S. donor	29	12 (41%)
Hewlett/PRB	11	5 (45%)
World Bank	18	7 (39%)
European donor	22	20 (91%)
ESRC	6	5 (83%)
AFD and IRD	7	7 (100%)
NWO-WOTRO	3	3 (100%)
RCN	6	5 (83%)
Total	51	32 (63%)

SOURCE: Lee and Belohlav (2013, Appendix A).

^a Study considers at least one country in SSA.

addition, many of the projects funded by the European partners have included developing-country collaborators and trainees. For example, WOTRO grants have included ample funding for Ph.D. students and postdocs, including several in a developing country. WOTRO requests submission of proposal and management of the project by a senior PI and co-PI from the Netherlands and a developing country (and an SSA researcher can be the PI). The French require a developing-country co-PI. ESRC requires a developing-country collaborator. In Section IV.A.2, we noted the capacity-building aspect of the ESRC-supported project in Burkina Faso. All of the RCN projects involve developing-country collaborators. In its evaluations of proposals that made it through the first round of review, WOTRO included the requirement of stakeholder meetings and later brought this idea to the joint call. Furthermore, in general, there has been more attention to policy issues and policy outreach in some of the European-funded projects, as can be seen from some of the examples in Section IV.C.2.

However, in other respects, some of the projects funded by the European donors are less consistent with PopPov goals than those funded by other donors. For example, some IRD projects focus on migration, which is not a PopPov priority topic, and many of the RCN projects look at the influences *on*, rather than *of*, demographics and RH. As we saw in Section IV.B.4, the research funded by some of the European partners has been less likely to use the types of data and methods recommended by the CGD working group. And fewer of the European PIs are economists (42 percent) than those funded by other donors (75 percent). As we discuss in the next subsection, this has led to some interdiscipline frustration at the PopPov conferences. Sara Seims of the Hewlett Foundation commented,

[T]he Hewlett Foundation had little control over all of the research topics funded by our European partners and it is true that many of them were off the original themes, but we considered that there was sufficient overlap of interest to go forward with the joint funding.

The fact that each European partner has used a different name for its part of PopPov has led to some confusion about the relationship among the parts and therefore to some lack of understanding and appreciation of the entirety of the effort. This has limited the opportunity for brand-name recognition.²²

The European partner organizations feel that they have benefited considerably from their involvement with PopPov. For example, Lyndy Griffin, who is with the ESRC Research, Partnerships and International Directorate, commented,

ESRC has benefitted greatly from this excellent collaboration with the Hewlett Foundation. ESRC is keen to foster on-going linkages with international development actors in the US and the PopPov initiative is a flagship example of such collaboration. Our involvement in PopPov has leveraged significant funds to focus on research in the area of population and reproduction health. The recent multi-lateral call has forged links with the other PopPov EU partners with the promise of further collaboration in the future. Involvement in PopPov conferences has allowed ESRC to expand its engagement with PopPov networks.

In contrast to the research supported by the European donors, more of the PIs for the World Bank research were economists (88 percent) than the PopPov average (67 percent), but less of the research was on SSA (39 percent). Furthermore, much of the World Bank research on SSA has been on the effects of AIDS, not a direct PopPov priority. In addition, very little of the World Bank research for PopPov included developing-country collaborators.

IV.D.4. The Design and Implementation of the Annual PopPov Conferences and Associated Activities

The annual conferences bring together fellows and researchers funded by PopPov with some non-PopPov researchers and some advocates and policymakers to expose them to the latest research findings and encourage interaction among them. Hence, the conferences have aspects related to various PopPov's goals—field-building, building up of an evidence base, and dissemination to policymakers. To evaluate the PopPov conferences, we reviewed the programs of the PopPov conferences and documented the characteristics of the research presented and of the people presenting papers and of the other attendees. We have also reviewed previous evaluations of the conferences and have done some new tabulations of data from the evaluation of the Oslo conference. In addition, we have interviewed individuals who participated in the design and implementation of the conference programs, individuals who reviewed proposals for presentations at the annual conferences, and individuals who have attended conferences and pre-conference workshops to get their opinions about the conferences. We also asked about the conferences in our online survey. In what follows, we discuss characteristics of presentations, presenters, and attendees; views on the quality or usefulness of presentations; policy relevance and interactions of researchers with policymakers and program implementers; representation of African presenters and attendees; and other aspects of the conferences.

²² As an example of the possibility for confusion, the joint call for proposals was titled "Population, Reproductive Health and Economic Development 'PopDev': The Impacts of Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics on Poverty and Economic Growth." Hence, the term *PopDev*, the name of the Dutch component of PopPov, was used for an effort that also involved PRB, ESRC, and RCN.

IV.D.4.a. General Features of the Conferences

As noted in Section II.B.3, the conferences grew in size between the first one, in London in November 2006, and the sixth one, in Accra, in January 2012, while the most recent one in Oslo had about the same number of registered participants as the previous one in Accra. A senior informant who has been to a number of the conferences feels that the conferences have improved over time and that the quality of the research has improved. This may be in part because more of it is complete now: Several of the people who have attended more than one of the conferences commented that the one in 2012 in Accra was the first one at which most of the papers were presenting (nearly) final results rather than work in progress. One informant particularly liked the addition of posters at the most recent conference, which he thought was a good way for young researchers and those who had just begun their research to get feedback. He thought that this was much more effective than having parallel sessions, in which the junior researchers tended to be relegated to sessions not attended by senior researchers. Several respondents to our online survey also commented that they did not like the parallel sessions.

Most people who have attended the conferences speak very highly of them, and evaluations that PRB has done of the past three conferences through online surveys show that the vast majority of respondents rate the conferences as excellent or very good. Respondents to our online survey and key-informant interviews commented that the conferences are well organized and well run. The conferences are quite “high end”—held at nice hotels in interesting places, with good meals—and they provide attendees with opportunities to talk to others with similar interests, and many attendees receive funding to participate. As we discussed in Section IV.A.3.d, the survey respondents made many positive comments about opportunities for interaction provided by the conferences, noting that they were very valuable for their professional development and career advancement. The fellows, particularly, welcome the opportunities to interact with senior researchers in the field.

In the online survey, we asked respondents about their experiences with the conferences and what they felt were the conferences’ strongest and weakest aspects.²³ Although a substantial number of researchers had very positive impressions of the conferences (“easily my favorite conference of the year,” “conference is very good,” “the design of the conference I attended was perfect”), there were aspects that respondents criticized, such as timing (“The conference is right in the middle of our [economist] job market. That is largely why I stopped attending”). Other concerns are dealt with separately in what follows.

One challenge of the conferences is that, at any given time, there are both projects that are in progress and others that are closer to completion. (Out of 22 survey respondents who had presented at a PopPov conference, 13 said that they presented research in progress. Not surprisingly, research presented in 2013 was more likely to be complete than that presented earlier.) It seems that the focus, particularly in later years, was to expose the researchers (and nonresearcher attendees) to the latest findings (the cutting edge of research) in the field, which explains the opening to non-PopPov-funded research at later conferences. However, this development appears to have come at the expense of incoming cohorts of fellows (who seemed to receive less face time in later years) and researchers with less finalized projects who nevertheless could have benefited from feedback of others who have faced similar challenges in their own

²³ Ninety percent of PI and fellow respondents to our survey attended at least one conference. The percentage is smaller (70 percent) for co-PIs who responded to our survey.

research. In Section V, we make some specific recommendations about these issues for future conferences.

We were struck at the Oslo conference by the number of papers that seemed, at best, loosely related to the four research questions guiding PopPov, e.g., papers on obesity, Cesareans, and the effect of weather. Lloyd and Merrick (2011) and Lloyd (2012) noted that many of the papers presented in Marseilles and Accra, respectively, including those by non-PopPov researchers, were not on the PopPov research questions.

IV.D.4.b. Views on the Quality and Usefulness of Presentations

Several key informants and survey respondents felt that the quality of the papers presented was uneven (“Quality of work was quite varied”) or overall poor (“The quality of many sessions [is] quite low. I did not learn anything from many of the presentations”). Several felt that the overall quality of the research has been declining (“I noticed a trend from Dublin to Oslo whereby presented research is lower in quality and attendance by researchers from major research universities/institutes is lower”; “I have been concerned in the last two conferences about the quality of some of the presentations”; “The caliber of the papers in 2013 was on the whole not as high as in past years”). Indeed, in our tabulations of data that PRB collected to evaluate the Oslo conference, we found that people who had attended three or more previous conferences had a lower opinion of the Oslo conference than those who had attended fewer.

Disciplinary differences were evident in some comments. An economics-fellow survey respondent commented that the aspect of the conferences that he was found least useful was “[t]opics in sociology and few other areas of studies, where studies are not empirically rigorous, and they do not acknowledge the limitations of their analysis.” He added, “I think there should be more focus on more rigorous studies.” However, several non-economists commented that the least useful aspect for them was “pure econometrics” and “endless presentations of equations.” A sociologist PI commented that the “focus on presentation of quantitative and economic research is too strong.” A public health PI said, “too limited—no room whatsoever for qualitative methods,” while a sociologist fellow commented, “The methodological variety of the papers was limited, and the organizers should consider including more qualitative research.” A European senior researcher commented that he thought that PopPov had not been very open to interdisciplinary research and that there has been too much emphasis on economics. Similarly, staff of one of the European partners opined, “My only concern was the preponderance of quantitative research, with almost no qualitative work represented. Whilst this probably reflects the general focus of PopPov research, some further in-depth qualitative approaches would be welcome.” Staff of another European partner commented,

The main weakness is that there is only a limited number of presentations, leaving many of the participants idle for parts of the conference if the subjects of the presentations is too far removed from their own sphere of interest.

Our analysis of the data that PRB collected to evaluate the Oslo conference showed that economists and public health researchers were more likely to rate the conference as poor or fair (7.4 percent and 10 percent, respectively) than was the case for the total sample (4.7 percent); however, as these numbers show, in general, the conferences were highly rated by all disciplines. Economist attendees were the most likely to feel that the disciplinary mix at the conference was appropriate (88.5 percent, compared with an overall average of 82.8 percent),

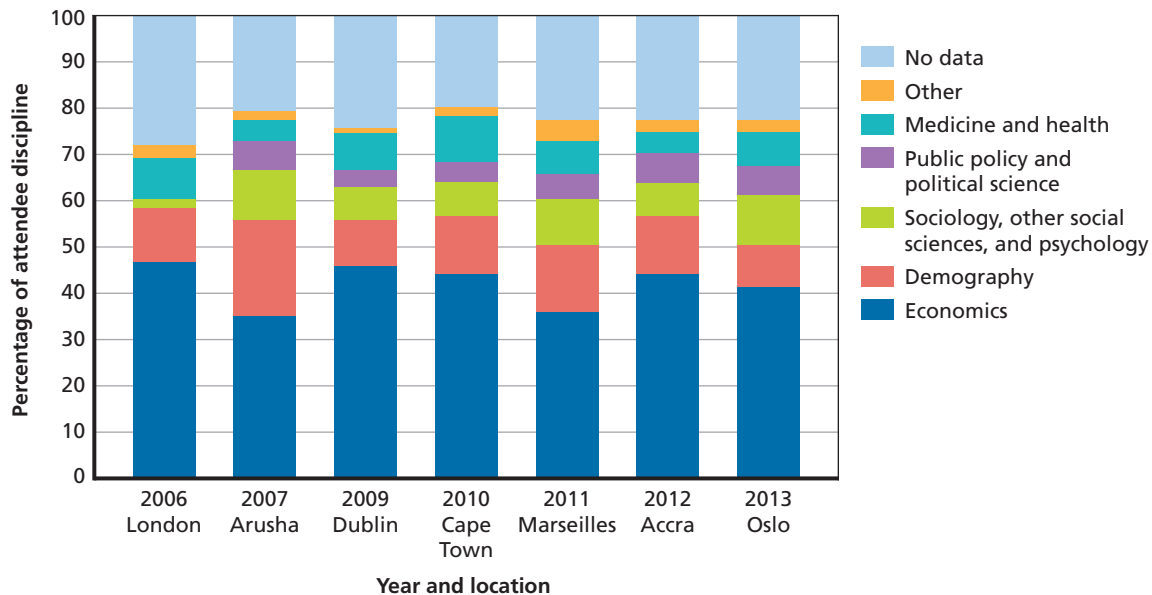
whereas those from other disciplines were more likely than economists to feel that there was no representation of one or more important disciplines or too much emphasis on one discipline (presumably economics), although, again, the majority of people of all disciplines appeared to be satisfied with the discipline mix.

As we discussed earlier, despite the fact that the majority of the fellows and many of the grantees are economists, as can be seen in Figure IV.4, the majority of conference attendees are not economists, though economists have been the modal group at every conference.²⁴ Demographers, other social scientists, and policy analysts were nearly as well represented as economists at the Arusha and Marseilles conference, but they have been a smaller contingent at others. However, at most of the conferences, especially the more-recent ones, relatively more of the presenters than attendees are economists (Figure IV.5).

IV.D.4.c. Policy Relevance and Interactions of Researchers with Policymakers and Program Implementers

Several frequently mentioned concerns about the conferences were that there was a lack of policy relevance and inadequate integration of policymakers. Before discussing these responses, it is relevant to see how well people involved with policy implementation or advocacy were represented at the conferences. Figure IV.6 shows that individuals working for government agencies or NGOs have always been a small percentage of the attendees at the conferences; the share

Figure IV.4
Percentage Distribution of Attendees at PopPov Annual Conferences, by Discipline and Year

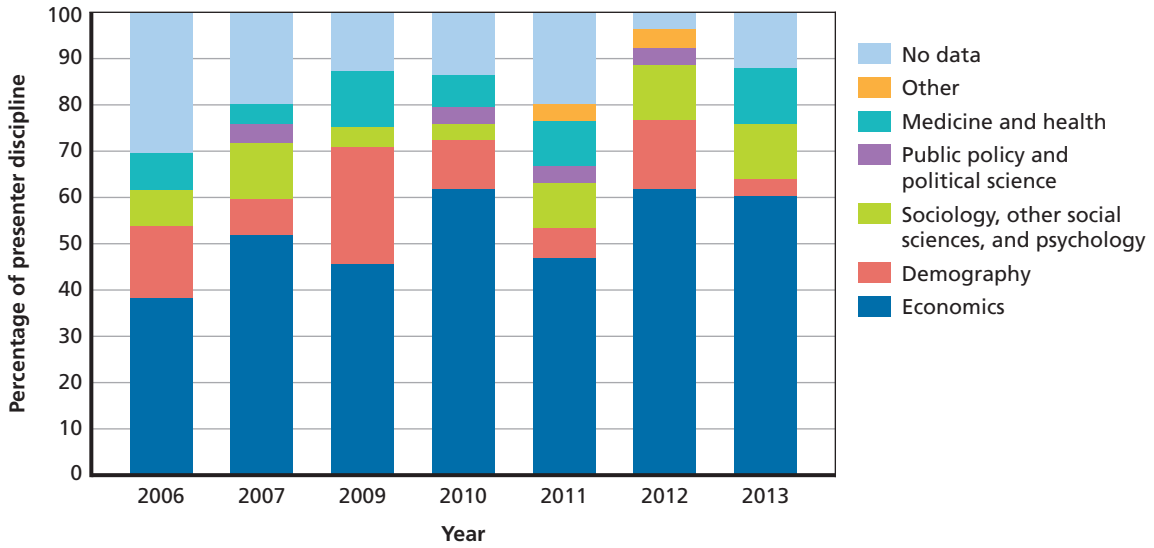


SOURCE: Spreadsheet we compiled of attendees at PopPov annual conferences.

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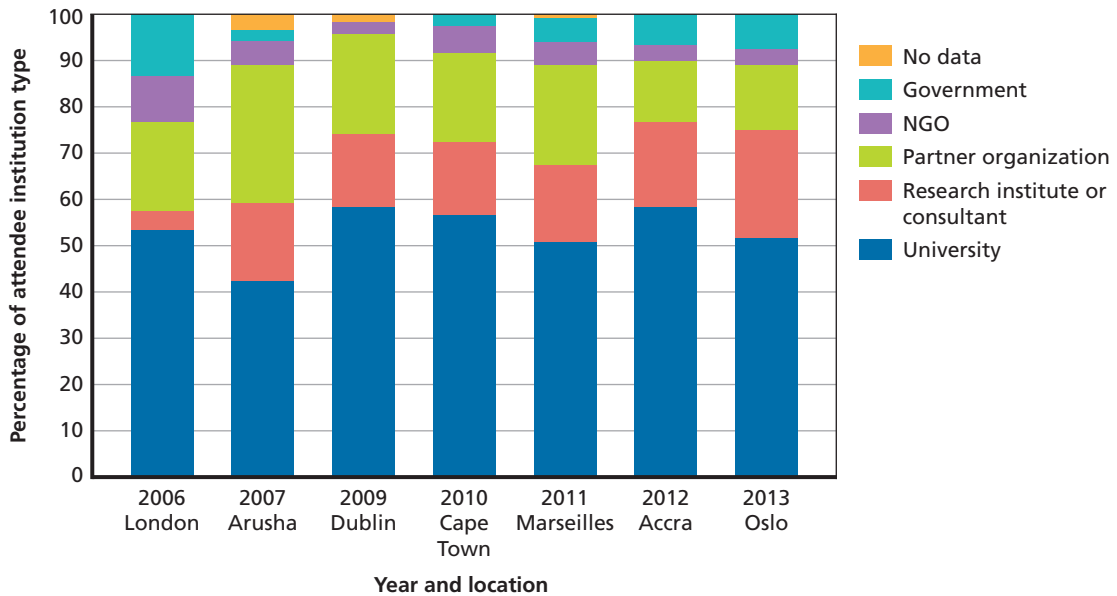
²⁴ Unfortunately, we do not know the disciplines of many attendees. We have tried to fill in missing information whenever possible through Google searches but were not able to find it for a number of people.

Figure IV.5
Percentage Distribution of Presenters (Paper Presenter, Panelist, or Other Speaker) at PopPov Annual Conferences, by Discipline and Year



SOURCE: Spreadsheet we compiled of attendees at PopPov annual conferences.
 RAND RR527-4.5

Figure IV.6
Percentage Distribution of Attendees at PopPov Annual Conferences, by Type of Institution and Year



SOURCE: Spreadsheet we compiled of attendees at PopPov annual conferences.
 RAND RR527-4.6

was highest for the first conference, in London (23 percent), but considerably lower (around 10 percent or less) at subsequent conferences.²⁵

Some key informants and survey respondents said that, although it was admirable that the conferences sought to bridge the gap between research and policy, they thought that conferences were not doing so successfully. Two staff members from a large international organization who attended the 2012 and 2013 conferences found the papers to be very analytical and divorced from application, and hence of little interest programmatically. These key informants further commented that they felt that the interpretations of some of the papers that looked at FP programs were incorrect. They suggested including more “family planning people” as discussants. They felt there was a disconnect between what they understood to be the conference objectives (focus on population dynamics, policy-relevant research, policy recommendations) and the research presented. They thought that it would be useful for the fellows to meet with those involved in programs to get more insight into doing research useful for policymakers and how to communicate to policymakers, and specifically mentioned the PRB Policy Communication fellows as an example.²⁶

Several respondents had suggestions for the organization of the conferences. An economics-fellow respondent to our online survey suggested that

it might be worthwhile to schedule it such that a morning or afternoon block will feature academic conference-type presentations, another block will feature a policy-oriented panel, and another one (which I think will be very useful) will feature invited academics who will distill recent research into a presentation aimed for policy audiences.

A sociologist co-PI based in Europe said that he would like to see more discussion of how the research results could be implemented into policy and which kind of research is useful to policymakers. Exactly how to integrate policymakers and researchers may be challenging, as indicated in our survey by this comment by an economist PI who attended the Cape Town conference:

There was an awkward attempt to integrate policymakers into sessions with basic researchers. I did not feel this worked well, since the research was generally at too granular a level for consumption by policymakers, and too early in the progress of the science. I would have been more comfortable if policymakers were presented with summaries of more established areas of research, i.e., findings that had been well replicated.

Staff of one of the European partners commented, “We would also welcome the introduction of a range of formats for dissemination and knowledge exchange beyond formal paper presentations: in particular we would recommend the inclusion of side workshops/roundtables aimed at promoting engagement with PopPov stakeholders.” Several respondents were confused as to whether the annual conference had an academic or policy focus (“It is not clear what out-

²⁵ We have coded anyone who was affiliated with one of the PopPov partner organizations in the partner category. In some cases, those people were not directly involved with PopPov and perhaps may have been more appropriately considered in another category (e.g., government for AFD).

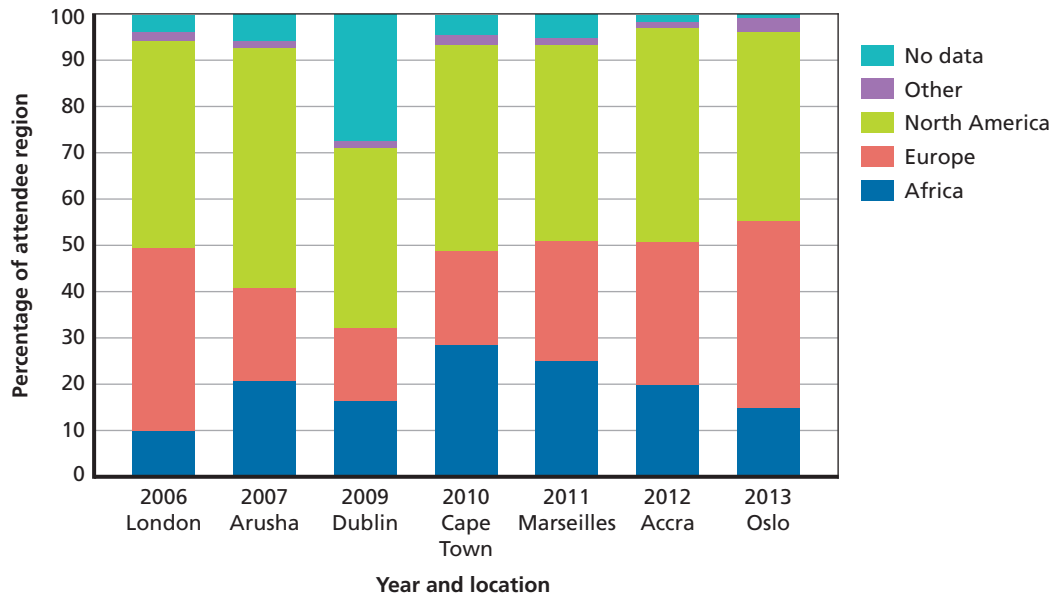
²⁶ There has been an effort to do this for PopPov fellows through a preconference workshop on communications, but it is very brief compared with the Policy Communication program.

comes are desired”; “I felt there was animosity especially by policy-focused folks criticizing the academics”).

The lack of policy relevance perceived by many attendees, and problems with bringing researchers into productive discussion with those involved with policy, points to a broader tension in PopPov between the aim of promoting innovative or high-quality research and the aim influencing policy. The conferences are basically research conferences, composed predominantly of researchers, and with a format that by and large follows that of other academic conferences. The majority of the presenters are researchers, and the majority of them, especially the fellows, are interested in communicating about their research to, and receiving feedback from, other researchers. Many do not have experience communicating effectively with policymakers, and the fact is that most of them do not put a high priority on doing so (relative to communicating with other researchers), as suggested in Section IV.C by the generally vague responses to the online survey question of policy implications.

This problem is not unique to the PopPov conferences (and more broadly is an issue affecting other research initiatives), but that does not mean that this situation cannot be improved. A junior-researcher key informant who presented at a recent conference suggested that the discussants could give technical comments privately to the presenters and focus their comments at the conference on broader issues. A demographer with a large international organization commented that the conferences would be more useful for policymakers if they focused on results. Novel approaches to linking different groups (such as junior and senior researchers, or researchers and policymakers) could be pursued and are discussed in our recommendations in Section V.

Figure IV.7
Percentage Distribution of Attendees at PopPov Annual Conferences, by Region of Institution and Year



SOURCE: Spreadsheet we compiled of attendees at PopPov annual conferences.

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IV.D.4.d. Representation of African Presenters and Attendees

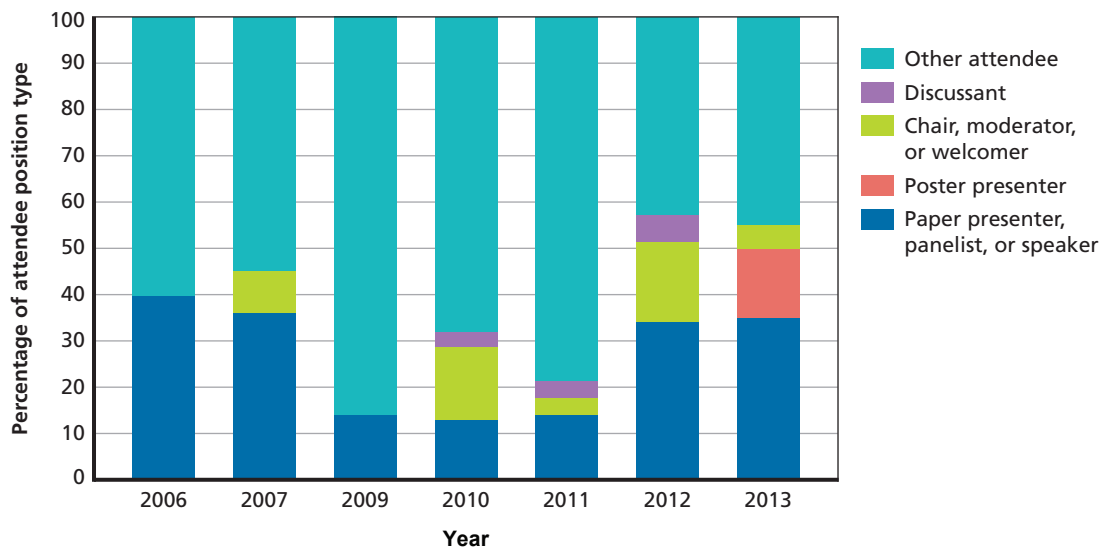
Attendance at a PopPov conference by researchers and students from SSA could contribute to the goal of building research capacity in SSA. The percentage of attendees based at institutions in SSA has ranged from 9 percent in London in 2006 to 28 percent in Cape Town in 2010. As seen in Figure IV.7, the percentage of attendees who are from SSA has tended to be somewhat higher when the conferences are held in SSA. A demographer originally from SSA and now with a large international organization who attended the Oslo conference commented that there were very few top professors from Africa at that conference. Indeed, there were 20 attendees from African universities at the Oslo conference, compared with 35 in Accra, though 20 does not strike us as particularly low. Greater participation by top African professors could lead to more fellowship applications from their students.

In Figure IV.8, we look at the roles played in the conferences by attendees from SSA. (This can be compared with Figure II.1, which shows the roles for all attendees.) At the 2009 through 2011 conferences, very few of the African attendees were on the podium. (Indeed, Lloyd and Merrick [2011] commented on this in their report on the Marseilles conference.) This situation improved greatly in 2012 and 2013. At Oslo, half of the attendees from SSA presented papers or posters. However, several of the presentations by researchers from SSA were very weak (and the problem was more with the quality of the research rather than the quality of the presentation). This is another example of the tensions and trade-offs faced by PopPov—in this case, between scientific rigor and the representation of African researchers on the program.

IV.D.4.e. Other Aspects of the Conferences

The preconference workshops were mentioned by several respondents to our online survey as one of the most-useful aspects of the conference. One commented, “The methods workshop component is particularly enriching to the fellows.” One respondent felt that the methods

Figure IV.8
Percentage Distribution of African Attendees at PopPov Annual Conferences, by Conference Role and Year



SOURCE: Spreadsheet we compiled of attendees at PopPov annual conferences.

RAND RR527-4.8

workshops could be specific by discipline because method needs differ between economists and non-economists. A co-PI remarked that “more space for sharing information about methods and data would have helped.” Fellows also appreciated the preconference workshop on communicating to policymakers and mentioned the workshop in Accra as having been of particular interest.

Nearly all survey respondents who had presented at a PopPov conference felt that they received useful feedback on their presentations. This was especially likely for presentations of work in progress (12 out of 13) and equally likely for PIs and fellows (9 out of 11 for each group).

A majority of respondents named networking as another major benefit of the conferences, and the off-site dinner was mentioned as an excellent opportunity for this purpose. One respondent suggested having longer breaks between sessions to enable more networking. Although some respondents mentioned specific types of papers they enjoyed, most participants lauded the breadth of topics that allowed them to enlarge their horizons and liked the plenary-style yet relatively intimate setting of the conference as a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas.

A person involved in the organization of the conferences commented that he felt that the weakest aspect of the conferences has been that there has been little audience participation.

We observed that many of the discussants at Oslo in 2013 focused on individual papers and did not give much attention to synthesizing across them. At that conference (and earlier ones), the discussants tended to be senior economists who had a long-term involvement with PopPov, although, on the last day of the Oslo conference, several alumni fellows were discussants. One survey respondent commented, “There was a repetition of discussants across years. It would be more helpful for fellows/grantees/alum if more individuals are given these opportunities.”

IV.D.5. The PopPov Website

The PopPov website (PopPov Research Network, undated) provides information on PopPov people, projects, and conferences and includes a recently updated bibliography of papers on PopPov research.²⁷ There are pages on research (which includes a list of funded projects, the bibliography, and some researcher interviews); PopPov conferences (including the programs for all the conferences and PDFs of the slides for some of the presentations); and on communications and methods; the last two include information from workshops on these topics held before the annual PopPov conferences. However, it is not straightforward to find information about key aspects of the initiative. For example, there are no tabs on the PopPov home page for PopPov fellows or research briefs. (As of September 2013, these could be found via links at the top of or a sidebar on the “Funded Projects” page, which is under the “Research” tab.)

The PopPov website was developed after the secretariat moved to CGD (in 2007) and was revamped after PRB took over again as the secretariat for PopPov. At that time, efforts were made to add more user-friendly content, such as videos of interviews with researchers. Ten interviews with researchers and an overview of the Accra conference have been videotaped and

²⁷ Each of the partner organizations mentions its parts of PopPov or the output thereof on its website. These websites are not reviewed here.

posted on the PopPov website. Per PRB statistics on web visits, the website does get more traffic now, and people stay longer per visit than before.²⁸

The home page includes information about PopPov researchers and funders. For example, in July 2013, the lead piece was an interview with Jan Monteverde Haakonsen of ECONPOP about RCN's role in the PopPov research initiative. There is a sidebar on the home page on "News and Events" that lists happenings relevant to PopPov concerns (e.g., that *The Lancet* is launching an online version on global health). The content of the home page and sidebar changes frequently, but it sometimes includes material not very directly related to PopPov (e.g., about the donation of three machines to health centers).

In addition to the lack of easy access to information about many aspects of the initiative, the PopPov website is limited in other ways that reduce the likelihood that relevant material will be seen by all potentially pertinent audiences. For example, at the time of our research, the formats of the PopPov home page and all linked pages were very plain—no pictures, graphs, tables, maps, designs—and hence were unlikely to attract the attention of nonresearch audiences. (As of December 2013, the home page did have some photographs.) A key informant with a communication and advocacy organization commented about the website, "Pretty dry, to be honest, and not at all easy for me to navigate and see what might be useful to my work as an advocate." In addition, some of the information on the website is not up to date. For example, there is a note on the "About" page (as of September 2013) that says, "The deadline for submission of 'PopDev' pre-proposals is March 15, 2012"; there is a link for Member Login that has never been used as an individual login for members but rather as a group or administrative login; the descriptions of projects date from late 2009 or 2010 (it appears that they were prepared for the Cape Town and Marseilles conferences), and newer projects are not listed; and the descriptions of the research of the fellows are of plans rather than of completed work. All of this is unfortunate because it gives the impression that PopPov has been less productive than it actually has been.

One key informant commented that there had been some discussion at a partner meeting before one of the PopPov annual conferences about making the website more appropriate for policymakers, but nothing has been done about this. This is a real missed opportunity. A more user-friendly website (e.g., that highlights important findings, rather than burying references to the research briefs, and attempts as much as possible to engage nonresearchers) would help enhance the visibility of PopPov research, and hence its potential to affect policy.

The much more highly visited PRB website (PRB, undated [a]) should serve as a gateway through which various types of individuals would learn about PopPov and visit the PopPov website. However, as of September 2013, there is a small link to the PopPov website at the bottom of the PRB home page, along with links to two other "Affiliated Sites." This relatively low visibility is consistent with what we were told by PRB staff—that the PopPov website is intended mainly as a resource for researchers in the PopPov network. It is not currently structured or populated in a way to be very useful to nonresearch audiences.

²⁸ For example, the total number of visits increased by 59 percent between January 1–July 31, 2011, and January 1–July 31, 2013 (from 6,980 to 11,068), and the average time spent on the site increased by 17 percent (from 2 minutes 19 seconds to 2 minutes 43 seconds). (To put the number of visits in perspective, note that the PRB website receives 2 million visits per year.) During the 17-month period February 2012 to June 2013, PopPov videos posted at the beginning of that period received a total of from 196 to 538 visits each, with the most being for the video on migration and health.

Just as with the conferences, there is a need to more clearly think about the purpose of the website—what it tries to communicate and to whom—and to structure it accordingly. One of the challenges in doing this is that the website should serve a diverse audience and therefore needs to explicitly address these different people. In the concluding section, we make some specific suggestions about how PopPov could better reach these different audiences.

IV.D.6. Other Dissemination Products, Such as Research Briefs and Fact Sheets

We discussed above that researchers might not have the appropriate skills or interest to draw out the policy conclusions of their work and communicate them effectively to policymakers. One tool to translate academic research into language easily understood by policymakers commonly used is the policy or research brief. As noted earlier, PRB has produced six research briefs to disseminate the findings of PopPov (and two more were in process at the time of our research and are therefore not described here), a brief has been prepared on NWO-WOTRO-funded research, and a brief has been prepared on ESRC-funded research (see Hallman and Roca, 2011). Together with two RAND communications analysts (CAs) we have reviewed four of the briefs on the PopPov website and the one prepared on NWO-WOTRO research to assess the appropriateness of the briefs' content and formats for policy audiences.²⁹ Although the briefs provide useful summaries of some of the research done for PopPov (and sometimes synthesize the results of several different papers), they are not as appropriate for policymakers as they could be. The very name *research brief* rather than *policy brief* suggests more of an interest in the research aspects than in the policy aspects, and the titles, content, and writing style are more appropriate for researchers than for policymakers.³⁰ Furthermore, all but one of the six briefs prepared by PRB for PopPov are bylined by PRB staff; the lead author of many of the briefs is a junior staffer at PRB. Because one of the goals of PopPov was to involve well-known, senior researchers or developing-country researchers whose names would open doors, we think that they should be listed as authors or coauthors both for this reason and because it is their research that is being summarized.

In addition, the dissemination of the research briefs has been quite passive. They are posted to the PopPov website but not at all prominently.³¹ The briefs are mentioned in PRB email lists and in emails sent to members of the PopPov network, but there has been little effort to go beyond “preaching to the choir.” They are not generally available in hard copy,³² and they

²⁹ RAND CAs are experienced writers and briefers with expertise in analyzing and improving all forms of research communication. Their goal is to improve the clarity of RAND research and its accessibility to diverse audiences.

³⁰ A RAND CA who reviewed several of the PopPov briefs felt that they are not particularly appropriately written or clear for policymakers. He felt that many of them were not structured effectively; that they contained a lot of repetition, that the formatting was dense (e.g., no headings and extensive use of quotations in the brief on WOTRO research), making the briefs difficult to read; and that the use of footnotes is likely to turn some policymakers off. He also commented that he felt that it would be preferable to have more use of graphics (rather than tables) to present some of the findings. The brief on ESRC research, by contrast, has telegraphic section headings that help guide the reader.

³¹ As of October 2013, they are listed in a “Research Briefs” page accessible from the menu for the “Funded Projects” page of the research part of the PopPov website. Several months before that, they were listed in a sidebar on the “Funded Projects” page.

³² We understand that it may be expensive to print large numbers of hard copies, but some could be printed for specific purposes, perhaps only as display copies (and, say, a postcard-size takeaway with the links). For example, it would be useful to print a few copies that could be available for viewing at the PRB booth in the exhibition room at the PAA annual meeting or at other relevant conferences, especially those likely to be attended by nonresearch audiences.

are currently not available in other languages; each of these would make them more widely available and increase the possibilities of opportunistic dissemination. There are plans to translate some of the briefs into French, pending advice from West African experts.

IV.D.7. Support Provided and Efforts Required Once One Receives Funding

PRB manages the secretariat efficiently and transparently, and the same is true for IIE's management of the fellowship program. Key informants at a research institution that received early PopPov funding directly from the Hewlett Foundation commented that the interaction with Hewlett has been healthy; they feel that the foundation is sensible and hands-off but supportive. They noted that the foundation was very agreeable when they changed tasks (even in ways that may have moved away from central PopPov issues).

Fellows receive considerable support for complementary activities that enable them to remain active in the field. If a fellow has a paper or poster accepted for presentation at a conference (e.g., PAA, the IUSSP), IIE has provided funds for them to attend. As noted earlier, in the fall of 2012 there was a research-grant competition for alumni of the fellowship program, open to former fellows who had received their Ph.D.'s. This has enabled some former fellows to have funding to continue research on PopPov topics. And there is a Facebook page for current and former fellows that facilitates their keeping in touch.

PRB provides funds for people on the program to attend the annual conference but not for other grantees. One senior researcher commented that he did not realize that he should have included funds to attend the conferences in his budget and would have appreciated having been advised to do this.

Suggestions Regarding the Future of PopPov and Recommendations Based on the Evaluation

The starting premise that led to the development of the PopPov initiative was that evidence that population dynamics could affect economic outcomes might increase the interest of ministers of finance in funding population policies and that they might be most convinced by rigorous research done by respected economists. However, it was felt that there were key knowledge gaps in the evidence base about the effects of demographic change on economic outcomes at both the micro and macro levels, particularly for SSA, and that it was desirable to increase support for research and researchers that could answer the questions of potential interest to policymakers. The foundation faced the task of deciding how to devise a strategy to address this situation. One conceivable approach could have been to develop a narrow set of policy-relevant questions (that could, for example, have been derived with the help of policymakers), and then commission research institutions to answer these questions. A different option was to give relatively broad directives and let the research community come up with creative solutions. There were inherent tensions among the potential aims the initiative sought to achieve: research rigor, field-building, policy relevance, applicability to SSA, and capacity-building in SSA. For example, a relatively narrow directive developed with the help of policymakers would likely yield policy-relevant questions but limit the amount of field-building (because answering narrow questions yields quicker results than a broad directive; furthermore, contracting a specific research consortium would limit the amount of research done compared with a grant-based system that allows researchers more freedom in their choices of topics). Another potential drawback of such an approach is that there is the possibility that research rigor would be relatively low: Answering a narrow set of policy-relevant questions would likely be of little interest to many researchers in this area (i.e., reduce the pool of available talent), and the questions so asked may not easily lend themselves to study based on rigorous techniques (for example, RCTs, the gold standard for many questions, are not applicable to most questions dealing with system-wide, macro issues but can test only relatively small-scale, narrow hypotheses). As PopPov evolved, other potential tensions arose. When the set of research questions was broadened to include influences on RH, this opened the door to a broader set of disciplines and other types of policymakers (ministers of health). Available data were generally not as strong for SSA, so there became a trade-off between focus on that region and research on other regions using better data. It was recognized that educational and research institutions in SSA lagged behind those in more-developed countries and that it was desirable to try to increase the capacity of students and researchers in SSA, but there was a tension between this goal and funding the highest-caliber applicants for fellowships and research grants. Similarly, at the conferences, there is the trade-off between having researchers from SSA present their work versus emphasis on the sophistication of the research methods.

The Hewlett Foundation made decisions when designing the initiative and arrived at a model in which, initially, a small group of established researchers were invited to compete for research grants, and the resulting academically rigorous results would then be disseminated to policymakers using translational tools, such as policy briefs. Another objective of PopPov was to build the field, which seemed to have been a major reason for giving relatively broad directives in the call for proposals, which made these calls more appealing to a range of academics who may have not wanted to work on very narrowly specified research questions or in regions with which they did not feel comfortable or in which they were not interested. Both of these assumptions can be questioned. For example, it could be that policymakers do not care much about academic research in general and that suggestions received from a consulting company would have been equally or more convincing, or policymakers may react to only the very narrow questions that are of relevance for their own countries, so a strategy in which policymakers were consulted to produce a list of questions they would like to see answered would have been more effective. As also discussed earlier, there is an inherent tension between policy relevance and field-building: Narrow questions that are potentially more immediately translated into policy are likely less appealing to established researchers and are therefore less likely to be conducive to field-building. Similarly, results from a specific RCT in one country on a specific subpopulation are likely not perceived as being particularly policy-relevant by a policymaker in another country. Although arguments can be made both in favor and against the approach taken, we cannot evaluate these hypothetical scenarios and counterfactuals. In what follows, we evaluate the PopPov initiative *as it was implemented* according to the goals set out and stated as the basis of the RFP for this evaluation (field-building, evidence base, policy-relevant research output). If we perceive that a certain goal was not optimally attained, we point out potential reasons for this shortcoming and whether a different approach to achieve that particular goal might have yielded different results.

V.A. Addressing the Questions Raised in the Request for Proposals Regarding the Future of PopPov

We now address the questions regarding the future of PopPov laid out in the RFP for this evaluation:

1. Should the focus still be on the research questions (listed in Section II.A) that have guided PopPov to date, or are there some new or different issues that should be emphasized? What are the important policy questions that research could inform? What are the research questions for which policymakers want answers? What are the best ways to encourage that the research supported be policy-relevant and effectively disseminated to policymakers?
2. What improvements in methodology or data collection and use are needed to address the key research questions? Is PopPov the appropriate mechanism to support them?
3. How can the foundation optimally invest in policy-relevant research in the future (e.g., what is the right balance between investing in key people and funding research on specific topics; should future efforts be more directive about specific research questions)?

4. What might the foundation do in the future to help strengthen institutional research capacity in SSA?
5. Does the PopPov network merit continuation? If so, what can the foundation do to help ensure that it is sustainable?

V.A.1. Should the Focus Still Be on the Research Questions That Have Guided PopPov to Date, or Are There Some New or Different Issues That Should Be Emphasized? What Are the Important Policy Questions That Research Could Inform? What Are the Research Questions for Which Policymakers Want Answers? What Are the Best Ways to Encourage That the Research Supported Be Policy-Relevant and Effectively Disseminated to Policymakers?

Our main suggestion for this question is that PopPov needs to carefully consider whether future research aims to be directly and immediately policy-relevant or whether priority is given to continue building up the field (or some combination). For the first approach, we would suggest an expert meeting with policymakers and researchers to develop a list of researchable questions that policymakers want to see answered and that could form the basis for calls for proposals. If field-building continues to have the highest priority, continued support for the doctoral fellowship program and for researcher-initiated proposals is likely the (continued) best way forward, and we recommend the addition of support for *postdoctoral* fellows. As mentioned earlier, a mixed approach, with two separate calls for proposals (one research-oriented, the other policy-oriented), is also a possibility to consider. PopPov should decide what its comparative advantage is, given that there are other sources of funding for some of the types of research and training that PopPov has supported.

Much of the research that has been conducted for PopPov seems only weakly related to the questions that initially motivated the formation of PopPov (i.e., to investigate the economic impacts of demographic factors). The initial call for proposals focused on economic research, but the final (joint) call emphasized interdisciplinary research. We recommend that the foundation think about the types of policy-relevant research questions that can be its comparative advantage and then design training and capacity-building activities that complement those. There are other sources of funding (e.g., NIH and NSF) for sophisticated, cutting-edge research; we do not see this per se as the Hewlett Foundation's comparative advantage.

In terms of research on the specific topics PopPov has sought to address, we feel that the DD has taken on a life of its own, and the parts of the research on this supported by PopPov deserve some credit for the concept's growing acceptance. However, the concept is now widely embraced, and the World Bank is conducting a major study of the prospects for a DD in SSA. We see no need to continue PopPov support for research on this issue. And although the research on the two health-related questions (RQ.3 and RQ.4) and those viewed as out of scope here has yielded a number of publications in high-profile journals and research with implications for policy, it has led to a lot of research by non-economists (and hence has not necessarily contributed to the goal of building the field of economic demography), and there are other sources of funding for such research.

As for possible future topics, one African informant expressed the opinion that we know what the problems are and know what kinds of things are needed to address them but that what is needed now is experimental research on intervention design and cost-effective interventions. Other research needs mentioned by informants who are policymakers or have worked closely with policymakers included research on whether FP is a public good and on equity

issues. Regarding contraceptive use, a senior economist said that he thought that the main issue was not access but instead was discontinuation (due to side effects) and that the latter deserves more attention. These are questions to which policymakers want answers and that research could inform.

Sara Seims and Tamara Fox (who were with the Hewlett Foundation when PopPov began and during the early years of the program) said that reaching policymakers was not really PopPov's goal; the goal was to build the evidence base and the research community. However, now that progress has been made toward these goals, more attention should be given to disseminating the policy-relevant findings of the research. Although it is possible to do research that is both rigorous and policy-relevant, the best way to communicate this research to other researchers differs from the best way to communicate it to policymakers. As noted earlier, some key informants felt that PopPov's biggest weakness has been in communication with policymakers. They commented that there needs to be more analysis of stakeholder information needs. One key informant, a senior-economist grantee, thought that CGD has been more successful than PopPov in engaging policymakers; it brings in policymakers to talk about their interests. If PopPov wants to be more policy-relevant, it should probably do something like this to frame questions for future research it commissions. The stakeholders meetings that were instituted as part of the solicitation for research proposals in 2012 are an important step in making the research more policy-relevant. It is also encouraging that the review panel for proposals in 2012 included people who are knowledgeable about policy and policy research; that undoubtedly helped to give more emphasis to policy relevance and policy dissemination in the selection process. We recommend that this be continued.

Although PopPov has funded a number of well-done research projects and other activities, it is not clear that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Careful syntheses of what has been learned from technically sound existing research (both that funded by PopPov and that not done for PopPov), with particular attention to findings with policy implications and written in a way to be accessible to policymakers, would be a useful contribution that PopPov could support. (The SOPP report [Lee and Belohlav, 2013] is a step in this direction.) If appropriately created and authored, such pieces would have the potential to reach audiences that are not swayed by materials from advocacy groups that are associated with a particular point of view. (One possible credible author might be a National Academy of Sciences panel.) Related to this, PopPov might benefit from bringing in someone who specializes in strategic communication to identify audiences and outreach opportunities and to develop written materials and briefings appropriate for these. Rachel Nugent, the former program director for PopPov at PRB and then at CGD, commented that PRB is good at reaching some audiences but not necessarily all of the audiences that could benefit from information about PopPov. However, these additional activities would not be able to address a potentially more fundamental problem with the current approach to collecting PopPov evidence: At the moment, the research questions are chosen largely by the researchers, with relatively broad guidance from PopPov. This has led to a situation in which projects are selected largely based on academic criteria (e.g., data availability, statistical identification of clear effects rather than necessarily important effects) rather than on policy interest. To address this situation, the research questions to be addressed would have to be developed from the outset with policymakers, which might reduce their attractiveness to researchers. Although this trade-off is inevitable, it could likely be addressed with creative approaches, such as mixing open calls with calls that are based on very specific guidelines or

by requiring answering certain questions in exchange for academic freedom to do research on the researcher's preferred topic in the rest of the grant.

V.A.2. What Improvements in Methodology or Data Collection and Use Are Needed to Address the Key Research Questions? Is PopPov the Appropriate Mechanism to Support Them?

The answer to the first of these questions depends on what the research questions are. The data and methods should be the ones most appropriate for the questions asked, rather than being an end per se. Although PopPov funding has enabled collection of data for some projects (often supplementing existing data), in general, the collection of large-scale high-quality data is not a comparative advantage of PopPov, both because such data collection is typically quite expensive and because there are other sources of funding for it.

Over the past decade or so, there has been a major change in research methodology that moved away from structural-equation modeling (particularly that involving secondary, macro data) toward RCTs typically requiring primary data at the individual or household level. This change has been reflected in some of the projects that PopPov funded, several of which use RCTs (such as the work by Ashraf et al. that was cited in our survey as one of the most-influential pieces of research supported by PopPov). One nice feature of this type of research is that it is quite straightforward to communicate to policymakers. However, this type of project typically requires more funding because it entails data collection (as opposed to projects based on the analysis of secondary data, which more typically have been the basis of PopPov-funded studies). Also, because of the need to design and implement data collection, these projects require a relatively long time to arrive at conclusions, which goes counter to the idea of relatively quick analysis for policymaking. On the other hand, once the data are collected, the analyses can, at least in theory, be done fairly quickly. RCTs have also been criticized as potentially being difficult to use for extrapolation to settings different from the one in which the data were collected, as opposed to those based on multicountry data, such as the DHS. Although the verdict is still out on whether the potentially more-rigorous findings derived from RCTs outweigh their added costs and limitations in generalizability, this issue merits discussion before designing future PopPov calls for proposals. For example, projects could be allowed to differ in their time to completion and funding available depending on whether such primary data collection is involved.

V.A.3. How Can the Foundation Optimally Invest in Policy-Relevant Research in the Future (e.g., What Is the Right Balance Between Investing in Key People and Funding Research on Specific Topics; Should Future Efforts Be More Directive About Specific Research Questions)?

We already discussed the need for explicitly stating objectives and then matching the strategies to achieve these objectives. It seems to us that any new direction of the initiative should be carefully vetted with policymakers to ensure that it produces research that will be policy-relevant, as well as technically sound. The Hewlett Foundation should look for niches for which little funding is currently available. We discuss some potential trade-offs and their potential resolution in this section.

V.A.3.a. Disciplinary Focus

We believe that at this point that the foundation would be better off targeting issues rather than particular people or disciplines but also that it should continue to invest in the next generation with doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships and continuing the research-grant competition for alumni fellows. The disciplinary focus of the training should match that of the research being commissioned, ideally by including trainees in the research projects.

V.A.3.b. Investing in the Next Generation Versus Policy-Relevant Research

The fellowship program was successful in supporting new, well-trained researchers and producing a body of rigorous research; we therefore recommend keeping the fellowship program—in particular because it seems that, overall, the relatively inexpensive financial support that it provided not only allowed the fellows to do research on topics in which they were already interested but also allowed them to do more research than they would have otherwise (e.g., data collection), and it influenced their subsequent career trajectories. We also recommend that PopPov support some *postdoctoral* fellowships. Postdoctoral fellows sometimes can devote more attention to policy issues than predoctoral fellows, who are accountable to their academic advisers (who may not put a high priority on policy relevance). The fellowships to U.S.-based students also required little supervision on the part of PopPov, although reinstating the pre-conference meetings for fellows is probably an effective (and inexpensive) way to build the field and encourage collaboration among them. We also note that there are other sources of funding for doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships for students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, so we suggest that priority be given to students not eligible for these other sources of funding. We also recommend that the grant program for alumni fellows be continued to provide support for them to do further research on population issues. A possible way to encourage policy-relevant research would be to have a day-long workshop with groups of fellows and junior researchers in which they have to come up with potential approaches to a problem designed with the help of policymakers. Some of these projects likely would be taken up by them and aid in keeping PopPov policy-relevant. Such a workshop approach has been (successfully) used by several institutions, such as NIH, which recently held a weeklong mHealth Training Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), to come up with novel ideas using new technologies to solve health-related problems (see University of California Regents, undated). In addition, training on policy communication should be included as part of the PopPov fellowships.

V.A.3.c. Targeted Versus Broader Call Topics

If a key aim is to encourage academically rigorous research by established researchers, relatively broad calls have to be used because these researchers typically are not willing to stray too far from their research interests. However, there are other potential sources of funding for such research (e.g., NIH and NSF in the United States). Nonetheless, we do not think that academics are generally opposed to doing policy-relevant research but that often they may simply not be fully aware of policymakers' needs. We recommend that future calls have more targeted topics than previous ones have (and that this be taken seriously during the review process). A potential way to address this situation would be to have a round-table discussion at the annual conference that brings policymakers together with researchers. This could complement the policy-synthesis presentation that we recommend at the conferences.

V.A.4. What Might the Foundation Do in the Future to Help Strengthen Institutional Research Capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa?

A program of research that focuses on SSA should also give priority to building the capacity of researchers in that region to conduct research on it. By now, it has become clear that the starting situation of the African cohort is, on average, far behind that of students elsewhere and that substantial investment in training, mentorship, and supervision would be necessary to get African fellows up to speed. We noted in Section II.B.1 that the joint call (and some of the earlier European calls) gave considerable weight to the quality of collaboration in evaluating research proposals; however, this was not explicitly mentioned as a criterion for evaluating the initial rounds of proposals submitted to PRB. If building research capacity in SSA is something that PopPov values (and we think it should), we could envision a limited number of special slots for African fellows who would spend some time being trained in the United States or Canada or by researchers from those countries and would receive continued mentorship on their return in Africa. This is clearly a relatively costly task, not only financially but also in terms of human capital, and needs to be carefully thought through. We have also commented on the value of supporting postdoctoral fellows from SSA linked to PopPov research projects. Good candidates would include the students from SSA who have been PopPov doctoral fellows, to enable them to stay in the field. We recommend that there be explicit funding for the mentors. A good arrangement would be that the postdoc works on a specific project together with a senior researcher, both funded by PopPov. Joint projects between SSA institutions and developed-country institutions could also help build research capacity in SSA. The projects funded by the Europeans have done better in this regard than those funded by PRB or the World Bank.

In addition, there should be more effort to coordinate among the Hewlett Foundation's various initiatives to build capacity in SSA. For example, representatives of each of the African population-training institutions that the foundation supports could meet in conjunction with one of the PopPov conferences (particularly the ones held in Africa) to compare and coordinate efforts and to brainstorm about common issues, and they could bring some of their researchers and students to the conference. In addition, the foundation should investigate whether there are particular patterns of collaboration with African researchers and students (in other fields also) that are clear best practices in producing well-trained and productive social scientists and use these as a model for future capacity-building efforts.

V.A.5. Does the PopPov Network Merit Continuation? If So, What Can the Foundation Do to Help Ensure That It Is Sustainable?

The PopPov initiative has reenergized the field of economic demography as applied to the study of the interrelations between population and development in developing countries, generated a considerable body of research on these issues, and supported a new generation of researchers working on them. PopPov has generally been well run. It has been flexible and has tried new things—e.g., a poster session at the annual conference, stakeholder meetings, opening the fellows program to doctoral students at institutions in SSA, the grant program for alumni fellows—all of which have enhanced the program. There have been periodic evaluations of aspects of the initiative, and efforts have been made to address the concerns that they raised. The former president of the Hewlett Foundation attended several meetings regarding PopPov, which demonstrates that there is interest at the highest levels of the foundation. PopPov's efforts to build capacity in SSA are complementary with other foundation initiatives to accomplish this more broadly (though, as noted earlier, it appears that the potential comple-

mentarities have not been fully realized). The initiative has supported a dedicated core of reputable researchers through competitive grant-making with serious peer review and emphasis on excellence in research; it has connections to credible research and communication organizations, such as the World Bank, PRB, CGD, and partner organizations in Europe, and hence is not just an academic group. (Compared with the U.S. partners, the research supported by the European partners has tended to use less sophisticated analytic methods and has been less focused on PopPov research questions, but more of it has been on SSA and more of it has involved local researchers and stakeholders.) Many survey respondents expressed their enthusiasm for the initiative (as has been noted in quotes earlier). However, others shared areas of concern. For example, several respondents felt that PopPov has somewhat lost its direction (“I think PopPov is headed in the right direction, it just needs a bit more clarity in its objectives”). Although most respondents lauded the increase in research on PopPov topics that they perceived as being a result of PopPov funding, several worried about whether dissemination of this new research had been as successful (“I do sometimes worry that outside of population centers this increase in research has been less visible to the non-economic community”). For many of the reasons just noted, we feel that PopPov merits continuation but with some changes, which are summarized in Section V.B.

PopPov has had many goals, some of which are not very compatible with each other, resulting in a number of trade-offs—between generating new science and drawing out policy implications; between staying on target and allowing researchers leeway; between supporting leading-edge research and building human and institutional capacity where these are relatively very weak; and between reaching ministers of health (who may be quite open to receiving public health messages based on PopPov research) and reaching ministers of finance (who may be more difficult to convince because they are less likely to see the “monetary” value of reducing fertility and population growth). We recommend that a future version of PopPov prioritize its aims, focusing on those that should be its comparative advantage and then design activities accordingly.

Although we believe that it would be productive for the foundation to continue support for the research and especially the training aspects of PopPov, our opinion is that, even if these are not continued, it would be useful to continue having the conferences for several years past 2014, probably until 2016, so that there is time for findings to emerge from the last round of research (which was funded in 2012) and last round of fellows (funded for 2013 through 2015). However, we recommend that the conferences be more focused and for there to be more effort to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts by having more syntheses and drawing out lessons learned, e.g., a panel at the end of the conference to assess the papers on various dimensions, such as new findings, important methodological advances, and policy implications. Or perhaps there should be a separate conference aimed at policymakers, or a last day of the conference devoted solely to this would be warranted. (The latter was suggested by several key informants. Also, see recommendations regarding conferences below.)

Sustainability of a program like PopPov is challenging. Most people funded by it (fellows and grantees) have received about two years of funding for their research, though there has been funding to support people’s travel to the network meetings to ensure cohesiveness of the group over many years, and most of the researchers who have had research funding from PopPov value the interchange afforded by PopPov, particularly at the conferences. However, if the research and fellowship programs continue operating, the number of people in the network will continue to grow, increasing the costs of trying to keep everyone involved, and there is the

risk that the group could become self-limiting and that funding constraints could limit the participation of nonnetwork members who could bring some fresh perspectives.

V.B. Recommendations

The Hewlett Foundation will have to make decisions about the future of PopPov based on the foundation's current objectives and available resources. After reflection, the foundation may wish to shift focus to either more-deliberate field-building work or more policy-oriented activities. We feel that much of the PopPov initiative has added value but that, to some extent, the field-building and policy aims are separable. Whether the foundation chooses to pursue a comprehensive agenda in the future or a more focused one, there are changes to consider based on experience to date. Drawing on the analyses we have done for this evaluation and the discussion in this report, we conclude by making recommendations about the PopPov initiative in general, the research program, the fellowship program (and field-building), increasing research capacity in SSA, the annual PopPov conferences, other dissemination activities and policy outreach, and evaluations of future initiatives.

V.B.1. PopPov Initiative

V.B.1.a. Explicitly State and Prioritize Objectives of a Future Version of PopPov and Then Design Strategies to Achieve These Objectives

There are inherent tensions among the aims that PopPov has sought to achieve: research rigor, field-building (at all levels of seniority), policy relevance, applicability to SSA, capacity-building in SSA, and increasing attention to population and development issues in Europe. The current initiative has given more priority to some of these objectives (particularly research rigor, training of doctoral fellows, and increasing attention in Europe), often at the expense of others.

V.B.1.b. Focus on Activities and Goals That Are to the Foundation's Comparative Advantage

There are other sources of funding (e.g., NIH and NSF) for sophisticated, cutting-edge research and the collection of large-scale high-quality data; this per se is not the Hewlett Foundation's comparative advantage. The foundation should look for niches for which little funding is currently available (e.g., for training researchers from developing countries). Decisions about involvement of partner organizations should then be made in a way that is consistent with the initiative's objectives.

V.B.1.c. Establish a Standing Steering or Advisory Committee for PopPov

Unlike staff involved when PopPov began, the people currently managing PopPov at PRB and IIE are not economists, and they have not had a long history of involvement with PopPov issues. Researchers with relevant expertise are brought in on an ad hoc basis, e.g., to review proposals or plan conferences, but there is not consistent oversight from such experts. Also, there does not seem to be as much coordination between PRB and IIE on substantive issues as would be optimal, and there have been some changes in project management across and within organizations. Having a dedicated committee of experts who are paid for their time and will give the effort the necessary attention should improve the likelihood that activities are conducted in ways that are consistent with program goals and should improve the coordination among aspects of the initiative and potentially competing goals. The steering or advi-

sory committee should include people with expertise and experience relevant to the initiative's goals (e.g., experts who are knowledgeable about policy issues, about identifying and communicating to target audiences, and about research issues and capacity-building in developing countries); researchers of relevant disciplines should also be represented. Most projects as large as PopPov—for example, the DHS—have one or more standing steering committees. Some of the European partner organizations have scientific (advisory) committees overseeing their PopPov programs. If policy relevance continues to be a goal, any new direction of the initiative should be carefully vetted with policymakers to ensure that it produces research that will be policy-relevant, as well as technically sound.

V.B.2. The Research Program

PopPov has produced a considerable body of research. However, less than half of the research is on the questions of the effects of demographic factors on economic outcomes that initially motivated the development of the initiative. Perhaps it is time to change gears a bit and focus more on getting at the specific questions asked and translating them into credible policy recommendations and then communicating them to key target policymakers. Accordingly, if the research program is continued, we recommend the following.

V.B.2.a. Be More Directive About the Topics to Be Addressed (and Take This Seriously During the Review Process)

We recommend that a new working group, which includes policymakers, be convened to frame researchable questions that are of greatest interest to policymakers and program managers.¹ This could even be implemented in a way in which policymakers formulate the first round of suggested topics but would benefit from repeated interaction in which policymakers hear feedback from researchers and fine-tune topics that way. Because policymakers are busy people, one way to implement this would be a half-day workshop in which policymakers first hear in a very brief manner where the evidence stands on key topics and then are encouraged to come up with a research question each. Each policymaker could then be paired with a leading researcher on the topic for an hour-long discussion that would allow the policymaker to convey his or her needs, and the researcher to help turn this into a researchable question. This would also expose the researchers to much-needed policy contact that, in turn, would make the importance of policy impact more tangible and motivate them to think more along these lines. Among the topics that could be discussed at such a working group are these, suggested by key informants (including policymakers) with whom we spoke:

- the social and economic benefits of public investments in RH (e.g., whether FP is a public good)
- what FP and RH interventions work and why
- contraceptive discontinuation
- equity issues
- the payoffs to investments in FP and RH versus those to investments in other areas (e.g., malaria, rural roads).

¹ There had been some discussion of CGD doing something like this, but it ended up taking the form of a meeting, chaired by John May (then at CGD), titled *The Role of Population and Development Research in Western Africa*, which was less focused on economic research and more on how decisions are made in West Africa. See May and McQueston (2013).

V.B.2.b. Rather Than Suggesting the Use of Specific Types of Data or Methods, Encourage Applicants to Propose the Types of Data and Methods That Are Most Appropriate for Their Research Questions

V.B.2.c. Consider Awarding Some Large Grants That Could Cover the Costs of Useful Experiments and Panel Data Collection, Which Are Costly, Even If This Is at the Expense of Reducing the Total Number of Grants

V.B.2.d. Consider Making Some Grants for Longer Periods of Time If This Allows for the Achievement of Research Goals, Such as Enabling Time for Data Collection

V.B.2.e. Undertake Efforts to Increase the Policy Relevance of PopPov Research

In order to enhance PopPov’s policy relevance, it should try the following:

- Include more reviewers of research proposals with policy and program experience.
- Give more weight to policy relevance in making decisions about projects that will be funded.
- Continue the stakeholder meetings that are held for teams invited to submit full proposals. This has helped increase buy-in from relevant parties within the countries being studied.
- Consider having a daylong workshop at which fellows and junior researchers design potential approaches to a problem designed with the help of policymakers. (See Section V.A.3.b.)

V.B.2.f. Assess the Extent to Which Research on PopPov Questions on Countries Not in Sub-Saharan Africa, Whether or Not Supported by PopPov, Has Had Useful Policy Implications for Sub-Saharan Africa or Could Be Useful in Encouraging New Policy-Relevant Research in or on Sub-Saharan Africa

V.B.3. Fellowships (and Field-Building)

The fellowship program has been successful in supporting new, well-trained researchers and producing a body of rigorous research. The program has filled a noteworthy void, particularly for students who are studying at institutions that do not have training grants from NICHD or who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.² We recommend that the fellowship program be continued but with some changes.

V.B.3.a. Be More Proactive in Trying to Attract High-Quality Fellowship Applications from African Students

See Section IV.D.2.

V.B.3.b. Give Priority to Applicants for Doctoral Fellowships from Sub-Saharan Africa and Others from Developing Countries Who Are Not U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents

V.B.3.c. Support Postdoctoral Fellowships, Ideally Tied to Research Projects, for Applicants from Sub-Saharan Africa and Others from Developing Countries Who Are Not U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents

This also is discussed in more detail below.

² Only U.S. citizens and permanent residents are eligible for NIH training grants.

V.B.3.d. Include a Former PopPov Fellow on the Selection Committee***V.B.3.e. Consider Having IIE Fellows Participate in the Activities That PRB Offers for Its Policy Communication Fellows***

Currently the PRB Policy Communication Fellows program is available only to researchers from particular developing countries that are supported by USAID.³ Because the program focuses on communication with policymakers, it would be valuable for all PopPov fellows.

V.B.3.f. Reinstate the Session the Day Before the Annual PopPov Conference Begins at Which Fellows Can Share Their Work with and Get Feedback from One Another (and Some Senior Researchers)

The fellows who participated in this all found it to be very worthwhile and have missed it at recent conferences.⁴

V.B.3.g. Continue and Expand the Program of Research Grants for Alumni Fellows, to Enable Them to Continue to Do Research on PopPov Topics

If field-building continues to be a goal, the *field* must be clearly defined, perhaps in a way that emphasizes topics more than a specific discipline or set of methods. In order to bring new researchers into the field, the Hewlett Foundation should consider the model of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Health and Society Scholars program. RWJF explicitly chooses fellows who are not trained in public health and then uses an interdisciplinary post-doctoral fellowship to train people from various backgrounds in public health. In that way, RWJF has legitimately grown the field of public health research. If PopPov is serious about growing the field, then it needs to do the hard work of recruiting new faces and getting them immersed in the study of the topics of interest. Another successful effort at field-building that may provide useful lessons for the Hewlett Foundation is the building of the field of behavioral and social research on aging at NIA (though that was done at funding levels most likely well beyond those that the Hewlett Foundation will want to invest).

V.B.3.h. Define Field More Specifically and See What Can Be Learned from Efforts to Build Other Fields**V.B.4. Increasing Research Capacity in Africa**

To increase research capacity in SSA, we recommend the following.

V.B.4.a. Support Carefully Mentored Postdoctoral Fellowships for African Scholars

Try to incorporate the postdocs into PopPov research projects; this would enable mentoring to occur naturally. If this does not occur, include funding for mentors' time so that they can work closely with the postdocs. Previous doctoral fellows from SSA or junior researchers from SSA who have worked on PopPov projects might be ideal candidates for further investment.

³ At present, two IIE fellows also participate in the PRB Policy Communication program. For a list of the countries from which applicants must come, see PRB, undated (b).

⁴ If time constraints preclude doing both, this may be a more productive use of the fellows' time than a preconference workshop on research methods (because many fellows have studied these as part of the doctoral programs and needs differ across disciplines).

V.B.4.b. Improve Coordination Among the Hewlett Foundation's Various Initiatives to Build Capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa

These initiatives were mentioned in Section IV.A.2. A key informant from SSA suggested, as an example, that representatives of each of the African population training institutions that the Hewlett Foundation supports could meet in conjunction with a PopPov conference (particularly the ones held in Africa) to compare and coordinate efforts and brainstorm about common issues, and they could bring some of their staff or students to the conference. Among the issues that could be discussed are the extent to which investments should be in individuals versus institutions; opinions on this point differ. For example, there is a shortage of good mentors within Africa, so it would be good either to bring developed-country mentors to African institutions (probably on a short-term basis) or have the African students spend time at institutions in the United States or Canada, probably with quite formal mentoring arrangements (e.g., some funding for the mentor). He also commented that it would be productive for PopPov to reach out to students at institutions, such as the Regional Institute of Population Studies (RIPS) in Ghana and l'Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques (IFORD) in Cameroon.⁵

V.B.4.c. Investigate Whether There Are Particular Patterns of Collaboration with African Researchers and Students (in Other Fields Also) That Are Clear Best Practices in Producing Well-Trained and Productive Social Scientists and Use These as a Model for Future Capacity-Building Efforts

V.B.5. Annual PopPov Conferences

Although the majority of researchers had a very positive impression of the conferences (and particularly valued the networking opportunities), there were aspects that respondents criticized, such as timing, the uneven quality of the research being presented, the fact that many of the papers at recent conferences were not on the PopPov research questions, the disciplinary mix (much of the research is by economists, but many attendees are not economists), lack of attention to policy issues (and to making the presentations appropriate for policymakers), the absence of Africans on the podium in earlier years, and the fact that there is a mix of papers on work in progress (on which presenters receive useful feedback) and others that are closer to completion. The focus, particularly in later years, seems to have been to expose the researchers (and nonresearcher attendees) to the cutting edge of research in the field, but this has come at the expense of fellows (who seemed to receive less face time in later years) and of researchers with less finalized projects who nevertheless could have benefited from feedback or have faced similar challenges in their own research. We recommend the following regarding the annual conference.

⁵ Hewlett staff have noted that there are many links between PopPov and its other initiatives in SSA:

The WBCA consortium members all have staff/students who are PIs on PopPov projects or fellows, for example. APHRC is the next host of the PopPov conference in 2014. A number of the key players in the Francophone training (IFORD [in Cameroon], ISSP [in Burkina Faso; Institut supérieur des sciences de la population]) also received research funding from DEMENTREND. Colleagues from the training institutions have been reviewers for fellowships and served on PopPov conference committees.

V.B.5.a. Continue PopPov Conferences at Least Until 2016

This will ensure that there is time for findings to emerge from the last round of research (which was funded in 2012) and last round of fellows (funded for 2013 through 2015).

V.B.5.b. Have the Conferences Focus More (Than the Recent Ones Have) on Findings and Less on Methodology

Discussants' detailed methodological comments could be given privately to authors, or there could be a session or a half day devoted specifically to methodological issues (though, ideally, presented in a way to make them as accessible as possible to attendees whose main interests are not in methodology).

V.B.5.c. Continue and Possibly Expand the Poster Sessions

These provide a good opportunity for researchers to get feedback on research in its early stages.

V.B.5.d. Structure the Conferences in a Way That Makes It Clear What Each Part of the Conference Is About and Whom It Is Targeting

For example, there is little value in having policymakers sit in on technical academic presentations. To remedy the situation of the multiple goals of the conferences (presentation of completed research versus getting feedback on work in progress, presenting about research methodology and findings to other researchers versus disseminating relevant results to policymakers and advocates), we recommend that the conferences be clearly structured to address these different goals. A potential structure of a conference more clearly reflecting these conflicting goals explicitly could include the following components:

- a preconference workshop on communications, with practice sessions for people presenting at the conference
- presentations by fellows with feedback from assigned reviewers
- sessions on other work in progress with assigned discussants working on similar projects
- a session on PopPov-funded finalized research with one academic discussant and one policy discussant
- a session on cutting-edge research from outside PopPov with one academic discussant and one policy discussant
- a session on translated research directed at policymakers in the presence of the researchers having done the research for questions from policymakers. Having all of the discussions of interest to policymakers take place in a condensed period of time would allow busy policymakers to attend for a shorter time while getting all that would be most useful to them.

V.B.5.e. Alternatively, Consider Having a Separate Meeting with Policymakers of Presentations About PopPov and Other Research with Policy-Relevant Findings, with Presentations Designed to Be Appropriate for a Nontechnical Audience***V.B.5.f. Make the Conferences More Focused Topic-Wise, and Try to Make the Whole Greater Than the Sum of the Parts***

This could be done, for example, by having more syntheses and drawing out of lessons learned. For example, there could a panel at the end of the conference to assess the papers on various dimensions, e.g., new findings, important methodological advances, and, most importantly, policy implications.

V.B.5.g. Non-PopPov Research Should Continue to Be Presented at the Conferences If It Is Directly Pertinent to the Conference Topical Focus

V.B.5.h. Consider Publishing Conference Proceedings (Including a Summary of Discussants' Comments and Audience Discussion) and Doing So in a Way That It Is Widely Accessible to the Population and Development Communities

This will enable interested parties outside of the network to be more aware of PopPov research and discussions of it.

V.B.5.i. Have Some Discussants from Outside the Network, Including Development Economists Who Have Not Worked on Population Issues and People with Policy, Program, and Advocacy Experience, to Get Some Fresh Perspectives

The steering committee suggested earlier could be a good source of recommendations. Try to find a leading researcher who has not been supported by PopPov who could make a presentation about pertinent research that he or she has done and who could also serve as a discussant in another session or in an end-of-conference panel.

V.B.5.j. Invite More Top-Level Academics from African Universities and Some Other Researchers at African Population Institutions That Are Supported by the Hewlett Foundation

This may also have the advantage of encouraging these professors' students to apply for doctoral fellowships.

V.B.5.k. Hewlett/PRB Fellows Should Continue to Be Invited to Future Conferences If They Are Still Working on PopPov Topics

Perhaps have a competition for travel grants, for which applicants would explain how attendance would be beneficial to their career development. These Hewlett/PRB fellows should be considered as possible session chairs or discussants.

V.B.5.l. Consider Holding a Conference in the United States

This would make it easier for people at such organizations as USAID and the World Bank to attend and should make more likely the participation of U.S. development economists and demographers who are not part of the network.

V.B.5.m. Consider Holding the Annual Conference Some Time Other Than Late January

The original idea was to hold the conference earlier in January, before academics needed to return to teaching, but this has not been the case recently. In addition, January is the month when economics students finishing their Ph.D.'s are on the job market, which, in some cases, limits their ability to attend the PopPov conference. Furthermore, winter weather causes some flight delays and cancellations and makes some northern venues unappealing to some potential participants.

V.B.5.n. Explore the Possibility of Piggybacking a PopPov Conference onto a Meeting of the World Economic Forum or a Conference of the NTA Project, or at Least Having Some Formal Links with These Forums

The World Economic Forum is attended by the types of people PopPov strives to reach. (Some Norad officials were not able to attend the PopPov conference in Oslo because they were at the World Economic Forum.) NTA addresses issues very similar to those in one of the key PopPov research questions.

V.B.6. Other Dissemination Activities and Policy Outreach

Many researchers and advocates in the population and development field have very little, if any, awareness of PopPov. The PopPov website (PopPov Research Network, undated) currently focuses on researchers in the network; it is difficult to find some important material (e.g., briefs), and some of the material on it is not up to date. The briefs prepared for PopPov are more appropriate for researchers than for policymakers. If PopPov is serious about producing research that can influence policy, it needs to make policy translation a more central part of the program and less of an afterthought. To improve dissemination and policy outreach, we recommend the following.

V.B.6.a. Be More Proactive in Letting People Know About the Network, Its Research and Findings, and the Opportunities for People Who Are Not Part of the Network to Present at the Annual Conferences (If This Is Continued)

This could be done through email alerts (to a broader group than currently receives them), having its own blog or participating in other blogs on development issues (see Section IV.B.6.d), a newsletter, modifications to the website that make it more user-friendly to people outside the network (see Section IV.B.6.e), and (more) outreach at relevant professional meetings. PopPov is known primarily by the inner circle of the network but is not as widely known outside that group as it should be.⁶

V.B.6.b. Mention PopPov More Prominently on the PRB Website

The latter is much more widely visited than the PopPov site.

V.B.6.c. Consider Working with a Firm Experienced in Strategic Communication About Population and Development Issues to Identify Audiences and Outreach Opportunities

PRB reaches a certain audience but does not necessarily reach all audiences that would benefit from knowing about PopPov research.⁷

V.B.6.d. Increase Outreach to the Economic Development Community

This can be done in several ways. First, more effort can be made to get PopPov research presented at development-economics conferences. Second, PRB can reach out to the numerous blogs by economists that cover development issues to get postings about PopPov research. *Development Impact* and *Africa Can End Poverty*, both at the World Bank, and Chris Blattman's blog are three prominent blogs dealing with development or Africa. The individuals running these blogs are researchers and routinely write about new developments in the field or allow guest posts by those involved in these developments. There are many other development blogs, some more research-oriented, others more policy-oriented (for example, several are devoted to aid effectiveness). Reaching out to them could take the form of contacting the

⁶ This was acceptable when the project was at an early stage and there were relatively few results, but communication needs are different now that there is a lot of completed research.

⁷ When the Population Matters project, which was funded mainly by the Hewlett Foundation, was active at RAND, the project team worked closely with a strategic-communication firm in Washington, D.C., that built mailing lists for the project and targeted lists for specific topics and actively sought dissemination opportunities. The Population Research Center was also helpful in arranging for office meetings and presentations on Capitol Hill. Whenever Population Matters had a new document, it (or a link to it) would be sent to the mailing list developed for it. In addition, the project worked with RAND CAs to prepare briefs (and briefings) that were appropriate for nontechnical audiences, and many of them were translated into pertinent languages.

individuals behind the blogs to get a mention and a link to the PopPov site, or perhaps a guest blog post. Third, PopPov could organize presentations at the World Bank and other pertinent institutions (both academic and nonacademic) to explain the overall research agenda and key findings.

V.B.6.e. Revamp the PopPov Website to Make It Up to Date and More Appropriate for Potentially Interested Parties (Including Nonresearchers) Who Are Not Involved in the Network, Including Policymakers and the Media

We recommend that the goal be that the PopPov website is where policymakers, researchers, and other interested parties want to go to learn the latest scientifically sound findings about the relationships of population dynamics and RH with economic development, poverty, and inequality. For example, there should be a link labeled something like “information for policy-makers” very prominently on the home page that would lead to a synthesis of the research findings to date written in language that nontechnical readers can understand, as well as a listing of people whom a reader could contact with follow-up questions. This is a much broader role than the website, with its focus on researchers in the network, currently plays.

V.B.6.f. Make the Briefs More Appropriate for Policy Audiences

It would help to call them “policy briefs” rather than “research briefs.” Also, have the key people who conducted the research actively participate in the preparation of policy briefs about that research and list those people as coauthors of the briefs. Agreement to collaborate on the preparation of policy briefs should be a condition for receiving funding.

V.B.6.g. As Appropriate, Translate Briefs into Other Languages

One example is using French for dissemination to researchers, policymakers, and donors in Francophone Africa and in France.

V.B.6.h. Be More Proactive About the Dissemination of the Briefs

For example, have display copies at relevant conferences and events.

V.B.6.i. Look for Opportunities to Present PopPov Research at Conferences, Such as Women Deliver, That Are Attended by Policymakers, Advocates, and the Press

V.B.7. Suggestions for Evaluations of Future Initiatives

In this report, we conduct an ex post evaluation of the PopPov initiative, meaning that the evaluation was not planned as an integral part of the initiative but was conducted as a decision aid at a time after the initiative had been running for a number of years. This situation means that we faced several obstacles that could have been avoided had the evaluation been part of the original design of the PopPov initiative. For example, we had to infer the original aims of PopPov through our reading of the available documents and personal communication with key informants about the history leading to the PopPov initiative. Similarly, we had to design appropriate outcome measures related to these inferred objectives to evaluate whether certain objectives have been achieved.

Our first recommendation for future such initiatives is to plan evaluation strategies as an integral program component that avoids the uncertainties and assumptions with which we had

to work in this evaluation. What would such a system allowing for evaluation ideally look like? Two key components of an evaluation system are⁸

- *clear objectives:* We have written at length in this report about the inherent tensions in the PopPov objectives (research rigor, research focus on SSA, field-building, disciplinary focus, capacity-building in SSA, policy impact); a first step toward minimizing such tensions for a future initiative is to state its objectives clearly and assign priorities to them, i.e., recognizing that focusing on some objectives requires a trade-off with other, conflicting objectives.
- *outcome measures associated with these objectives:* One of the fundamental problems we faced in our ex post evaluation is that some of the objectives are relatively fuzzy by their very nature, such as field-building, a term that can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Thinking about outcome measures can also feed back into a clearer formulation of the objectives. PopPov should consider periodically administering an online survey, such as the objective parts of the one used for this evaluation, to grantees to monitor progress on and outcomes of future (and perhaps also previous) grants. If this is done, to improve response rates, we suggest that participation in the survey be required as a condition of receiving funding.

Explicitly stating the initiative's objectives and associated outcome measures will not only allow performance of an evaluation after the initiative has been conducted to judge its success but also (if correctly implemented) allow project monitoring and feedback to the target population of the initiative (for example, by being clear about expected achievements and how success will be measured).

⁸ This is a simplified version of the toolkit developed by CIVICUS for setting up a monitoring and evaluation system (see CIVICUS, 2011).

Key Informants Interviewed by RAND Project Staff

Staff Currently or Formerly with Funding or Partner Institutions

Wendy Baldwin, former president, PRB (June 2011–November 2013)
Kathleen Beegle, World Bank
Nancy Birdsall, president, CGD
William P. Butz, former president, PRB (October 2003–February 2011)
Ellen Carnevale, PRB
Helena Choi, Hewlett Foundation
Monica Das Gupta, formerly World Bank, now PRB and the University of Maryland
Kristen Devlin, PRB
Tamara Fox, formerly program officer, Population Program, Hewlett
Amanda Glassman, CGD
Jay Gribble, PRB
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Jan Monteverde Haakonsen, RCN
Philippe Hamelin, IRD
Elizabeth King, World Bank
Marlene Lee, PRB
Ruth Levine, director, Population Program, Hewlett Foundation
Elizabeth Lule, World Bank
John May, formerly World Bank, now PRB
Tom Merrick, formerly World Bank, now PRB; did several earlier evaluations of PopPov
Rachel Nugent, formerly PRB and CGD, now University of Washington
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Zoe McLaren
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Moses Nkang Nkang
J. M. Ian Salas

Gil Shapira
Margaret Triyana
Joshua Wilde

Population Experts Based in Africa

Alex Ezeh, executive director, APHRC
Cheikh Mbacké, independent consultant
Frederick Mugisha, Ministry of Finance in Uganda
Jotham Musinguzi, Partners in Population and Development
Eliya Msiyaphazi Zulu, executive director, AFIDEP

Other Researchers Who Have Received PopPov Support, Reviewed Proposals for PopPov, or Attended a PopPov Conference

Stan Bernstein, Re:Generation Consulting
David Bloom, Harvard University
David Canning, Harvard University
Francis Dodoo, Pennsylvania State University and RIPS
William Dow, University of California, Berkeley
Parfait Eloundou-Enyegue, Cornell University (by telephone after the conference)
Andrew Foster, Brown University
Elizabeth Frankenberg, Duke University
David Lam, University of Michigan
Murray Leibbrandt, University of Cape Town
Cynthia Lloyd, formerly Population Council; on CGD Working Group; did several earlier evaluations of PopPov
Jane Menken, University of Colorado
Claus Portner, Seattle University
T. Paul Schultz, Yale University
Duncan Thomas, Duke University

USAID

Y. J. Choi, Office of Population and Reproductive Health (OPRH)
Sarah Harbison, OPRH
Ellen Starbird, director, OPRH

Others

Kathy Bonk, Communications Consortium Media Center
Peter Donaldson, president, Population Council

Richard Easterlin, University of Southern California

Suzanne Ehlers, Population Action International

Caroline Kent, Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevoelkerung (German Foundation for World Population)

Tom LeGrand, University of Montreal

Serge Rabier, Equilibres et Populations

Amy Tsui, Johns Hopkins University

John Wilmoth, director, United Nations Population Division

Mary-Ellen Zuppan, IUSSP

Information About Respondents to Our Online Survey

Table B.1 shows characteristics of PIs and fellows with their response rates to Part 1 of our survey. Table B.2 shows characteristics of the *respondents* to the co-PI survey. It is not comparable to Table B.1 because we do not have this information for co-PIs who did not respond to the survey and therefore cannot compute response rates by characteristics for them. Only five of the co-PI respondents were graduate students or postdoctoral fellows; the rest were faculty, researchers, or scientists. Fewer of the co-PI respondents are economists (42 percent) than of PI respondents (67 percent), and more are of other disciplines (particularly demography, which is the discipline of 27 percent of the co-PI respondents but only 15 percent of the PI respondents).

Table B.1
Characteristics of Principal Investigators and Fellows and Their Response Rates to Part 1 of the Survey

Characteristic	Number		Number (and %) of Those Who Responded to Part 1	
	PI	Fellow	PI	Fellow
By region of institution ^a				
North America	19	48	9 (47%)	36 (75%)
South America	1	0	1 (100%)	—
Europe	20	0	9 (45%)	—
Anglophone SSA	9	0	5 (56%)	—
Francophone SSA	2	0	2 (100%)	—
By year grant began				
2004	1	0	1 (100%)	—
2005	3	0	0 (0%)	—
2006	13	4	9 (69%)	1 (25%)
2007	11	6	2 (18%)	4 (67%)
2008	9	8	8 (89%)	6 (75%)
2009	0	8	—	5 (63%)
2010	7	6	5 (71%)	6 (100%)
2011	0	9	—	9 (100%)
2012	5	7	2 (40%)	5 (71%)

Table B.1—Continued

Characteristic	Number		Number (and %) of Those Who Responded to Part 1	
	PI	Fellow	PI	Fellow
By discipline				
Economics	34	34	16 (47%)	25 (74%)
Demography	8	0	4 (50%)	—
Medicine or health	2	5	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Public policy or political science	2	4	2 (100%)	4 (100%)
Sociology or psychology	5	5	2 (40%)	4 (80%)
By funder				
Fellow				
PRB fellow	n.a.	10	n.a.	5 (50%)
IIE fellow	n.a.	38 ^b	n.a.	31 (82%)
Grant by U.S. partner				
Hewlett Foundation	2	n.a.	1 (50%)	n.a.
PRB	13	n.a.	7 (54%)	n.a.
World Bank	13	n.a.	3 (23%)	n.a.
Grant by European partner				
AFD	7	n.a.	5 (71%)	n.a.
ESRC	5	n.a.	4 (80%)	n.a.
NWO-WOTRO	5	n.a.	1 (20%)	n.a.
RCN	6	n.a.	5 (83%)	n.a.
Total	51	48	26 (51%)	36 (75%)

^a At time of grant or fellowship.

^b The survey was not sent to one IIE fellow who dropped out of the program.

ESRC and NWO-WOTRO projects tended to have more co-PIs on average than those of other donors. Therefore, these descriptive statistics do not necessarily imply a higher response rate from one discipline or region.

Table B.2
Characteristics of Respondents to Co-Principal Investigator Survey

Characteristic	n	Percentage of Total Co-PI Respondents
By position		
Faculty, researcher, or scientist	21	81.0
Grad student	2	7.7
Postdoc	3	11.5
By discipline		
Anthropology	1	3.8
Demography	7	26.9
Economics	11	42.3
Epidemiology	1	3.8
Public health	1	3.8
Sociology	4	5.8
Statistics	1	3.8
By region of current citizenship or permanent residence		
North America	1	3.8
South America	1	3.8
Europe	11	42.3
Anglophone SSA	6	23.1
Francophone SSA	5	19.2
Asia	2	7.7

Journals in Which PopPov Research Has Been Published

Table C.1
Journals in Which PopPov Research Has Been Published, Their Disciplines, and Impact Factors

Journal	Discipline	Articles	Two-Year Average IF
<i>African Journal of Reproductive Health</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	1	n.a.
<i>AIDS Research and Treatment</i>	Health and medicine	1	n.a.
<i>American Economic Journal: Applied Economics</i>	Economics	1	3.539
<i>American Economic Review</i>	Economics	2	2.792
<i>American Economic Review Proceedings</i>	Economics	2	n.a.
<i>American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene</i>	Health and medicine	1	2.534
<i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>	Other	1	2.110
<i>Anthropology and Medicine</i>	Other	1	n.a.
<i>Asian Economic Policy Review</i>	Economics	1	0.280
<i>BMC Public Health</i>	Health and medicine	1	2.076
<i>BMC Women's Health</i>	Health and medicine	1	1.505
<i>BMJ Open</i>	Health and medicine	1	n.a.
<i>Boston Review</i>	Other	1	n.a.
<i>Bulletin of the World Health Organization</i>	Health and medicine	1	5.250
<i>Culture, Health and Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, Intervention and Care</i>	Other	1	1.494
<i>Demographic Research</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	3	1.047
<i>Demography</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	1	2.305
<i>Economic Development and Cultural Change</i>	Economics	2	0.943
<i>Education Research International</i>	Other	1	n.a.
<i>European Journal of Population</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	2	1.300

Table C.1—Continued

Journal	Discipline	Articles	Two-Year Average IF
<i>Ghana Medical Journal</i>	Health and medicine	3	n.a.
<i>Global Health Promotion</i>	Health and medicine	1	0.729
<i>Health and Place</i>	Other	2	2.419
<i>Health Economics</i>	Economics	1	2.232
<i>IDS Bulletin</i>	Other	1	0.640
<i>International Health</i>	Health and medicine	1	1.102
<i>International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health</i>	Health and medicine	1	1.135
<i>Journal of African Economies</i>	Economics	1	0.575
<i>Journal of Comparative Economics</i>	Economics	1	0.657
<i>Journal of Development Economics</i>	Economics	1	2.353
<i>Journal of Development Studies</i>	Other	1	0.872
<i>Journal of Economic Growth</i>	Economics	1	2.250
<i>Lancet</i>	Health and medicine	2	39.060
<i>Notas de Población</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	1	n.a.
<i>Obstetrics and Gynecology</i>	Health and medicine	2	4.798
<i>PLoS ONE</i>	Other	2	3.730
<i>Population and Development Review</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	1	2.085
<i>Population Review</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	1	n.a.
<i>Population Studies: A Journal of Demography</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	1	1.081
<i>Quarterly Journal of Economics</i>	Economics	1	5.287
<i>Social Science and Medicine</i>	Other	3	2.733
<i>Sociological Forum</i>	Other	1	0.833
<i>Studies in Family Planning</i>	Demography, FP, and RH	5	1.960
<i>Tidsskr Nor laegefor (Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association)</i>	Health and medicine	2	n.a.
<i>Vaccine</i>	Health and medicine	1	3.492
<i>Water</i>	Other	1	n.a.
<i>World Bank Economic Review</i>	Economics	1	1.325
<i>World Bank Research Observer</i>	Economics	1	2.045
<i>World Development</i>	Economics	1	1.527

Definitions of *Economic Demography* in Descriptions of Courses on Economic Demography

Table D.1 provides descriptions of courses in economic demography that we found in an Internet search (in November 2013) for courses of that name.

Table D.1
Courses in Economic Demography

Institution	Department or School	Name	Description
Carleton College	Economics	Economic Demography	"This course explores topics in population studies, or demography, from an economic perspective. Core demographic variables, such as fertility, mortality, and migration, are both consequences and determinants of economic factors" (Carleton College, 2013).
University of California, Berkeley	Economics, demography (joint offering)	Introduction to Economic Demography	Ronald Lee's undergraduate course. "This course examines various economic and social causes and consequences of population change" (Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging at the University of California, Berkeley, undated).
University of California, Berkeley	Economics, demography (joint offering)	Economics of Population	Ronald Lee's graduate course. "Economic Demography teaches economic consequences of demographic change in developed and developing countries, for savings and capital formation, labor markets and intergenerational transfers. It also considers economic influences on family, fertility, migration, health and mortality" (Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging at the University of California, Berkeley, undated).
University of California, Berkeley,	Economics	Economic Demography	Mark Borgschulte's course. "Economic demography applies economic models [to] the study of human populations and the life cycle. This class will explore the economic theory and evidence on the classic demographic topics of fertility, marriage, migration and aging" (Borgschulte, 2013).
Lund University	School of Economics and Management	Master's program in economic demography	"Economic demography explores the relationship between population and economy in a broad sense; how a population is influenced by economic development and in what ways population changes affect the economy" (Lund University, undated).
University of Colombo	Demography	Economic Demography	"The objective of this course unit is to provide the students with an understanding of economic aspects as well as economic theories of demographic behaviour including fertility, mortality, marriages and labour supply. The course also provides students with an understanding of various economic and social causes and consequences of population change" (University of Colombo, undated).

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