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**Family Planning in the Development Policy of the United  
States: Empowering Women or Instrumentalization of  
Women's Bodies?**

Master's Thesis

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Study programme: Mezinárodní vztahy

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Year of the defence: 2024

## **Declaration**

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on  
January 3, 2024

Kristýna Pelikánová

## References

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## **Abstract**

Looking at the critical literature regarding family planning in the development policy many authors argue that population control is not a thing of the past but is present in the contemporary discourse and policies regarding population. The thesis identifies the main concerns associated with population growth and examines to what extent they determine the policy and aid allocation toward family planning programs of the United States over the period of 2010-2020. Using the panel data concerning developing countries through the OLS and fixed effect methods of estimation, the thesis examines to what extent is the aid allocation in the selected case determined by the recipient's income, bilateral trade with the donor country, recipient's political stability, maternal mortality, and stress on the water resources, used as a proxy for environmental degradation. The thesis finds certain evidence of the influence of environmental degradation and trade with the donor country on the allocation of support for family planning, but not the influence of maternal mortality, the reduction of which is proclaimed as one of the main goals of family planning programs. The conclusions of the thesis indicate the prevalence of strategic considerations in the allocation of foreign aid by the United States and the instrumentalization of women's bodies for strategic goals.

## **Abstrakt**

Při pohledu na kritickou literaturu týkající se programů rodinného plánování v rozvojové politice mnozí autoři tvrdí, že kontrola populace není věcí minulosti, ale zůstává přítomna v současném diskurzu a politice týkající se populace. Práce identifikuje hlavní obavy, spojené s populačním růstem, a zkoumá politiku a způsob alokace finančních prostředků na programy rodinného plánování Spojenými státy v období 2010-2020. Na panelových datech týkajících se rozvojových zemí prostřednictvím OLS a metody odhadu fixního efektu práce zkoumá, do jaké míry je alokace pomoci ve vybraném případě určena finanční situací přijímající země, bilaterálním obchodem s donorskou zemí, politickou stabilitou příjemce, mateřskou úmrtností a tlakem na vodní zdroje, který byl zvolen jako ukazatel zhoršování životního prostředí. Práce nachází důkaz pro vliv zhoršování životního prostředí a obchodu s dárcem na přidělování podpory na plánování rodičovství, nikoliv však vliv mateřské úmrtnosti, jejíž snížení je proklamováno jako jeden z hlavních cílů programů rodinného plánování. Závěry práce indikují převahu strategických úvah při přidělování zahraniční

pomoci Spojenými státy a skrze programy rodinného plánování instrumentalizaci těl žen z globálního jihu pro strategické cíle.

## **Keywords**

Family planning, population control, development policy, foreign aid, women's empowerment, reproductive rights

## **Klíčová slova**

Rodinné plánování, regulace populace, rozvojová politika, zahraniční pomoc, posílení postavení žen, reprodukční práva

## **Title**

Family Planning in the Development Policy of the United States: Empowering Women or Instrumentalization of Women's Bodies?

## **Název práce**

Rodinné plánování v rozvojové politice Spojených Států: posílení postavení žen, nebo instrumentalizace ženských těl?

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## Introduction

Family planning programs are an important part of the development agenda. Providing information, resources, and medical care to enable women<sup>1</sup> to make autonomous reproductive decisions is not only a key prerequisite to gender equality but is also associated with a significant reduction in maternal and child mortality.<sup>2</sup> But while family planning services can empower women, it has also been historically used as an instrument of control, explicitly guided by the goal of reducing natality in developing countries and often accompanied by harmful and coercive practices.<sup>3</sup> Influenced by the fear of overpopulation and neo-Malthusian theories, since its inception in the 1960s the international family planning programs were guided by population control linking the decrease in demographic growth to economic development, and in pursuing that goal manifested little concern for the women from developing countries that were located at the center of such policies, reducing them to means through which to reach economic targets.<sup>4</sup> Even though the explicit population control policies were abandoned after the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994, which set up a new agenda and shifted the focus to women's empowerment and their autonomy to make reproductive decisions and access appropriate healthcare, many remained skeptical and questioned whether it brought more than only a discursive change.<sup>5</sup> Despite the significance of the shift constituted by the Cairo Conference, some scholars argue that the goal of population control remained present in the policies as the population movement adopted the language of women's empowerment.<sup>6</sup> Hartmann described this development of the early 1990s as "the ideology of population control (is) being refurbished, polished with a feminist and environmentalist gloss".<sup>7</sup> Even though the language of women's rights in the context of family planning in development

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<sup>1</sup> Although family planning services are not limited to women, they are their primary recipients and also the primary subjects of the policies guiding such programs.

<sup>2</sup> Cleland, John, Stan Bernstein, Alex Ezeh, Anibal Faundes, Anna Glasier, and Jolene Innis. "Family Planning: The Unfinished Agenda." *The Lancet* 368, no. 9549 (November 18, 2006): 1810–27.

<sup>3</sup> Yanoshik, Kim, and Judy Norsigian. 'Contraception, Control, and Choice: International Perspectives'. In *Healing Technology: Feminist Perspectives*, 61–92. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Grimes, Seamus. "From Population Control to 'Reproductive Rights': Ideological Influences in Population Policy." *Third World Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (1998): 375–93.

<sup>5</sup> McIntosh, C. Alison, and Jason L. Finkle. "The Cairo Conference on Population and Development: A New Paradigm?" *Population and Development Review* 21, no. 2 (1995): 223–60.

<sup>6</sup> Nandagiri, Rishita. 'What's so Troubling about "Voluntary" Family Planning Anyway? A Feminist Perspective'. *Population Studies* 75, no. sup1 (15 December 2021): 221–34, McIntosh, C. Alison, and Jason L. Finkle. "The Cairo Conference on Population and Development: A New Paradigm?"

<sup>7</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. "Population Control in the New World Order." *Development in Practice* 2, no. 3 (1992): 210–15.

became prevalent, some authors are critical of the underlying aims of the policies, the returning focus on population control, and the instrumentalization of women's bodies for other goals.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding the complicated position of family planning in the international development agenda and its surrounding criticism, the thesis looks at the policy of the United States in the time period of 2010-2020 and analyzes to what degree the patterns of family planning aid allocation correspond to the proclaimed rhetoric of women's health and empowerment. In the analysis of the US policy, the thesis builds on the stream of literature that explores the various interests driving the policies regarding family planning in the development policy. The main aim of the thesis is to examine the considerations behind the foreign aid dedicated to family planning in light of the prevalent discourse of women's health and empowerment. The following research question is guiding the analysis: What are the determinants of the family planning aid allocation and to what extent is the policy of the United States determined by the concerns associated with population growth? And does the allocation of the family planning aid correspond to the proclaimed rhetoric?

To answer the research question, the thesis uses panel data of the family planning aid commitments of the United States to the 145 countries listed by the OECD as ODA recipients over the period of 2010-2020. The total amount of the development aid dedicated to family planning as reported by the OECD Creditor Reporting System constitutes a dependent variable. Reviewing the literature, the thesis identifies the main concerns connected with population growth, which can be supposedly remedied through the family planning programs in developing countries as economic, ecological, and security, and analyses to what extent they determine the allocation of the family planning aid of the United States.

Through the OLS and fixed effect methods of estimation, the thesis examines to what extent is the aid allocation in the selected case determined by the recipient's income, bilateral trade with the donor country, recipient's political stability, maternal mortality, and stress on the water resources, used as a proxy for environmental degradation. The results of the regression

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<sup>8</sup> Nandagiri, Rishita. 'What's so Troubling about "Voluntary" Family Planning Anyway? A Feminist Perspective', Foster, Emma A. 'International Sustainable Development Policy: (Re)Producing Sexual Norms through Eco-Discipline'. *Gender, Place & Culture* 21, no. 8 (September 2014): 1029–44., Horn, Denise M. 'Locating Security in the Womb'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 15, no. 2 (June 2013): 195–212.

estimation are then compared with the second model which replaces the dependent variable with ODA – the overall amount of bilateral aid commitments to the country from the selected sample by the United States as reported by the OECD Creditor Reporting System. As the strategic considerations are found to be associated with an increase in the amount of bilateral aid in the existing literature, by this comparison, the thesis aims to find whether we can observe determinants included in the model to be sector-specific.<sup>9</sup>

The United States is chosen as a case for the analysis of the determinants of family planning aid, as the largest donor of foreign aid, and family planning aid specifically, which historically played a leading role in shaping the agenda of population and international development.<sup>10</sup> Due to the amount of resources dedicated and as well as its economic and geopolitical power the United States has an ability to significantly influence the form of the programs as well as individual projects, having an overwhelming impact on the practice of family planning in developing countries. While the focus on one actor allows to analyze the specific case in more detail, it also limits the external validity of the results, which cannot be extended to other countries and actors, as existing research indicates that the determinants of the aid allocation vary significantly between countries.<sup>11</sup>

As a key part of the gender equality agenda, but also entangled in the questions of demography, economics, security, and ecological sustainability, the way in which donors approach this topic in the development agenda and where they put their focus have a significant impact on the form of the family planning programs. The thesis aims to contribute to the existing literature concerning the allocation of foreign aid and its determinants as well as to the knowledge concerning family planning in development and its motivations. Empirically testing the theories regarding the role of strategic interests in the allocation of family planning aid, the thesis provides a new understanding of family planning programs, which directly affect millions of people in the developing world.

The structure of the thesis proceeds as follows. First, the thesis presents a literature review

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<sup>9</sup> Hoeffler, Anke, and Verity Outram. 'Need, Merit, or Self-Interest—What Determines the Allocation of Aid?' *Review of Development Economics* 15, no. 2 (2011): 237–50.

<sup>10</sup> Eager, Paige Whaley. 'From Population Control to Reproductive Rights: Understanding Normative Change in Global Population Policy (1965–1994)'. *Global Society* 18, no. 2 (April 2004): 145–73.

<sup>11</sup> Berthélemy, Jean-Claude. 'Bilateral Donors' Interest vs. Recipients' Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?' *Review of Development Economics* 10, no. 2 (2006): 179–94.

and delineates the research gap that the thesis aims to fill. The second part of the thesis problematizes the family planning programs in the historical context and describes the development of the policy regarding international family planning of the United States and its role in defining the SRHR agenda globally as a selected case. The next part of the thesis follows with the methodology and description of the dataset that is deployed to answer the research question. In the next part, the results of the analysis are presented and interpreted, followed by a discussion of the possible limitations and conclusion, which summarize key findings, discuss their implications, and suggest potential areas of future research.

## **1. Literature review**

The literature review presents the overview of the existing research related to the topic of the thesis and identifies the research gap and the potential contribution of the thesis. The literature review is divided into two parts. First, it summarizes the existing literature concerned with the determinants of foreign aid allocation and its findings regarding the role of the donor's self-interest in aid disbursement. The second part is preoccupied with the existing research regarding the topic of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and family planning in international development and explains how the thesis relates to this stream of literature. The thesis follows the methodological approach of the existing research concerning the determinants of aid allocation, which is discussed in detail in the fourth chapter focused on methodology.

### **1.1. The foreign aid allocation and its determinants**

Foreign aid is a longstanding subject of research. While most of the literature is dedicated to the study of effects of the foreign aid, a substantial body of academic literature also analyzes the determinants of its allocation, with the first studies being conducted in the 1970s.<sup>12</sup> In the existing research, most authors analyze the determinants of foreign aid allocation that can be categorized as the donor's interest, the recipient's need, or the characteristics of the recipient country. Existing studies point to the conclusion that while generally a combination of factors plays a role in aid allocation decisions, self-interest, and strategic considerations of the donor country prevail in most cases.

The explanation that can be expected to have at least a significant impact on granting foreign aid is the need of the recipient country, in line with the proclaimed objectives of the international development agenda and donors' policies, which identify poverty alleviation among their primary goals. In the existing studies, this factor is often operationalized as GDP per capita (unless the research is focused on disaggregated aid addressing specific needs or aid directed to a specific sector) and interpreted as an altruistic motivation of the donor country.<sup>13</sup> Through the analysis of the foreign aid distributed by the OECD countries in the

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<sup>12</sup> McKinlay, R. D., and R. Little. 'A Foreign Policy Model of U.S. Bilateral Aid Allocation'. *World Politics* 30, no. 1 (1977): 58–86.

<sup>13</sup> Peiffer, Caryn, and Constantine Boussalis. 'Determining Aid Allocation Decision-Making: Towards a Comparative Sectoral Approach'. In *Handbook on the Economics of Foreign Aid*, 45–63. Cheltenham:

period of 1970-1994, Alesina & Dollar found that the recipient's lower income is associated with the larger amount of aid in the case of most donors, although with significant variation.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, their analysis also concludes that factors considered as donor's interests have stronger explanatory power.<sup>15</sup> Reviewing the available evidence Qian argues that while the needs of the developing countries play a certain role in the aid distribution, donors' own objectives are often the main factor.<sup>16</sup>

The research that includes the self-interest of the donor country as a factor in aid allocation often focuses on the economic objectives operationalized as a variable capturing the bilateral trade.<sup>17</sup> Analyzing the aid provided by the top 5 donors<sup>18</sup>, Hoeffler and Outram find that the amount of aid is positively influenced by the economic interest of the donor, expressed as the trade flow between the donor and recipient, in the case of all included donors.<sup>19</sup> A similar pattern in regard to the importance of economic interests is found by Younas who observes a significant positive relationship between aid and the import of capital goods by the recipient.<sup>20</sup> Analysis performed by Bérthélemy also concludes that donor countries give preference to their trading partners, supporting the hypothesis about the positive effect of the donor's economic interests in aid allocation.<sup>21</sup>

Apart from the economic interests, existing studies also include geopolitical considerations of the donor countries as an explanatory variable capturing self-interest. Hoeffler and Outram observe a positive effect of similar voting patterns in the United Nations on the aid disbursement in the cases of the UK and the US implying the importance of geopolitical interest for aid allocation.<sup>22</sup> Voting patterns in the UN were also found as a significant factor

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Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Alesina, Alberto, and David Dollar. "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?" *Journal of Economic Growth* 5, no. 1 (2000): 33–63.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Qian, Nancy. 'Making Progress on Foreign Aid'. *Annual Review of Economics* 7, no. 1 (2015): 277–308.

<sup>17</sup> Peiffer, Caryn, and Constantine Boussalis. 'Determining Aid Allocation Decision-Making: Towards a Comparative Sectoral Approach'.

<sup>18</sup> UK, US, Germany, France and Japan.

<sup>19</sup> Hoeffler, Anke, and Verity Outram. 'Need, Merit, or Self-Interest—What Determines the Allocation of Aid?'.

<sup>20</sup> Younas, Javed. 'Motivation for Bilateral Aid Allocation: Altruism or Trade Benefits'. *European Journal of Political Economy* 24, no. 3 (September 2008): 661–74.

<sup>21</sup> Bérthélemy, Jean-Claude. 'Bilateral Donors' Interest vs. Recipients' Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?'. Hoeffler, Anke, and Verity Outram. 'Need, Merit, or Self-Interest—What Determines the Allocation of Aid?'.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



for aid allocation by Alesina and Dollar.<sup>23</sup> Through the analysis of panel data for the period of 1973-2002 focusing specifically on the US, Dreher et. al found that the recipient's voting behavior in the UN is strongly connected to the amount of aid received from the United States.<sup>24</sup>

Existing literature also finds that besides the needs of the recipient and the donor's interest, influential are also the characteristics of the recipient country and its institutional environment.<sup>25</sup> The logic behind the consideration of the countries' institutions and policies assumes that good governance increases the aid effectiveness.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, through its conditioning, donors also use foreign aid to promote norms such as democratization and human rights and often reward countries that abide by those principles.<sup>27</sup>

Existing research suggests that aid allocation can be generally explained by the combination of the above-mentioned factors, but studies conducted on data comprising multiple donors also show that there are differences in the patterns of aid allocation among donors, with different factors showing varying levels of significance. For example, while Nordic countries are found to be guided more by altruistic motivations compared to other donors, the United States is considered to be driven more significantly by self-interest.<sup>28</sup> The variation in the donor's motivation is also demonstrated in the findings of Alesina and Dollar, who observe the colonial past to be a significant factor for the European countries, as their former colonies tend to receive more aid.<sup>29</sup>

Regarding the variation in the significance of the individual factors in influencing the aid allocation of different donors, we should also consider the research that specifically focuses

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<sup>23</sup> Alesina, Alberto, and David Dollar. "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?"

<sup>24</sup> Dreher, Axel, Peter Nunnenkamp, and Rainer Thiele. 'Does US Aid Buy UN General Assembly Votes? A Disaggregated Analysis' *Public Choice* 136, no. 1/2 (2008): 139–64.

<sup>25</sup> Alesina, Alberto, and Beatrice Weder. 'Do Corrupt Governments Receive Less Foreign Aid?' *The American Economic Review* 92, no. 4 (2002): 1126–37.

<sup>26</sup> Dollar, David, and Victoria Levin. 'The Increasing Selectivity of Foreign Aid, 1984–2003'. *World Development* 34, no. 12 (December 2006): 2034–46., Chauvet, Lisa. 'Socio-Political Instability and the Allocation of International Aid by Donors'. *European Journal of Political Economy* 19, no. 1 (March 2003): 33–59.

<sup>27</sup> Carnegie, Allison, and Nikolay Marinov. 'Foreign Aid, Human Rights, and Democracy Promotion: Evidence from a Natural Experiment'. *American Journal of Political Science* 61, no. 3 (2017): 671–83.

<sup>28</sup> Qian, Nancy. 'Making Progress on Foreign Aid'. Berthélemy, Jean-Claude. 'Bilateral Donors' Interest vs. Recipients' Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?'

<sup>29</sup> Alesina, Alberto, and David Dollar. "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?"

on the United States and its foreign aid strategies and motivations. The United States is generally considered to belong among the donors that are more guided by strategic and economic interests. Meernik et al. found that the significance of the strategic consideration diminished with the end of the Cold War when ideological goals gained in importance at the expense of security consideration.<sup>30</sup> Although Fleck and Kilby observed a subsequent rise in the importance of strategic consideration and diminishing role of the recipient need in the aid allocation with the onset of the war on terror.<sup>31</sup> In a cross-country study comparing multiple donors, Berhélemy found the United States to be “among the most egoistic” in granting aid to developing countries.<sup>32</sup>

Analyzing the policy of the United States, Askarov et. al also observe the influence of domestic political factors and the difference between liberals and conservatives that are projected into the foreign policy and aid allocation patterns.<sup>33</sup> This is especially relevant in the case of the Mexico City policy, which has a grave impact on SRHR-related funding and is periodically rescinded and reinstated depending on the political party that holds the presidency.<sup>34</sup> The findings of Eisensee & and Stromberg, who observe the influence of media coverage on the U.S. provision of disaster relief, also point to the importance of domestic factors in aid allocation.<sup>35</sup>

## **1.2. Determinants of the sector-specific aid dedicated to the family planning**

Most of the existing research is focused on the aggregate aid disbursed by donors to specific countries, analyzing patterns of overall aid allocation rather than distinguishing between the sectors. Peiffer and Boussalis found that as of 2015 over 150 studies were published concerning aggregate aid flows, while only 24 analyzed aid allocation that

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<sup>30</sup> Meernik, James, Eric L. Krueger, and Steven C. Poe. “Testing Models of U.S. Foreign Policy: Foreign Aid during and after the Cold War.” *The Journal of Politics* 60, no. 1 (1998): 63–85.

<sup>31</sup> Fleck, Robert K., and Christopher Kilby. “Changing Aid Regimes? U.S. Foreign Aid from the Cold War to the War on Terror.” *Journal of Development Economics* 91, no. 2 (March 1, 2010): 185–97.

<sup>32</sup> Berhélemy, Jean-Claude. ‘Bilateral Donors’ Interest vs. Recipients’ Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?’

<sup>33</sup> Askarov, Zohid, Hristos Doucouliagos, Martin Paldam, and T. D. Stanley. “Rewarding Good Political Behavior: US Aid, Democracy, and Human Rights.” *European Journal of Political Economy* 71 (January 1, 2022): 102089.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Samantha Lalisian, „Policing the Wombs of the World’s Women: The Mexico City Policy“, *Indiana Law Journal*, Vol. 95, Issue 3 (Summer 2020): 977-1004

<sup>35</sup> Eisensee, Thomas, and David Strömberg. ‘News Droughts, News Floods, and U. S. Disaster Relief’. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122, no. 2 (2007): 693–728.

distinguished between sectors.<sup>36</sup> Among the existing research in this area, the majority examines the aid meant to ameliorate specific humanitarian issues such as aid targeting a specific disease or disaster relief.<sup>37</sup> Contrary to the studies focused on the aggregate aid, authors observe that studies analyzing aid to those specific sectors found the recipient country's need to be dominant as a determinant of aid allocation.<sup>38</sup>

The determinants of the aid allocation identified in the studies focused on the aggregated aid flows can provide valuable information about the factors expected to influence the allocation of sector-specific family planning aid, but we also have to acknowledge that the motivations behind aid disbursement can differ across sectors. The family planning programs are specific in many aspects and different set of factors is expected to be driving the aid allocation as decisions concerning this area are subjected to specific types of pressures.

To the best of the author's knowledge, the only quantitative research focused specifically on the aid directed at family planning has been done by Asiedu et al. who analyzed the effect of the Mexico City policy on the family planning aid allocation of the United States.<sup>39</sup> The authors studied the panel data of aid allocation to 151 developing countries over the period 1988-2010 and found the negative effect of the donor's country policy on the amount of aid allocated, which was reduced by 3-6%, *ceteris paribus*.<sup>40</sup> The authors also conclude that more family planning aid is allocated to countries with higher fertility rates.<sup>41</sup>

While the determinants of the allocation of sectoral aid focused on family planning were not systematically studied, there is a body of qualitative research that is focused on family planning in international development, which this thesis follows. Tracing the development leading up to the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, Hartmann analyzes the previous population policies and efforts that led to the reframing of

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<sup>36</sup> Peiffer, Caryn, and Constantine Boussalis. 'Determining Aid Allocation Decision-Making: Towards a Comparative Sectored Approach'.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Asiedu, Elizabeth, Malokele Nanivazo, and Mwanza Nkusu. "Determinants of Foreign Aid in Family Planning: How Relevant Is the Mexico City Policy?", WIDER Working Paper 2013/118, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2013.

<sup>40</sup> Asiedu, Elizabeth, Malokele Nanivazo, and Mwanza Nkusu. "Determinants of Foreign Aid in Family Planning: How Relevant Is the Mexico City Policy?".

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

the issue.<sup>42</sup> She claims that the current development has to be understood in light of the history of population control and its coercive practices that still influence contemporary practice.<sup>43</sup> Grimes analyzing the ideological influences on the population policy also points out that the Cairo Program of Action still embraced the logic of fertility control and the ideological influences underpinning previous policies did not disappear despite the discursive change.<sup>44</sup> Tracing the process of building the consensus and creating the final document of the Cairo Plan of Action, McIntosh and Finckle point out the compromise being made between the feminist organizations that long objected to the population policies of the pre-Cairo era and the population control movement.<sup>45</sup> They argue that the mass distribution of contraception continued to dominate the development programs related to sexual and reproductive rights and health with little change even after the shift in the discourse surrounding the issue.<sup>46</sup>

There is also a strand of literature that critically analyses the current discourse concerning sexual and reproductive rights and health and identifies the resurfacing of population control in some of the policies and programs related to family planning. For example Foster analyze resurfacing narrative of population control in the context of the construction of environmental threats in the UN documents.<sup>47</sup> Wilson connects the identified resurgence of population control to the neoliberal understanding of the development and construction of women as a neoliberal subject, mobilized for global capital.<sup>48</sup> The thesis builds on this strand of critical literature arguing that current family planning programs place on women the responsibility to remedy a range of developmental and world issues their bodies are understood as an instrument to reach economic and environmental goals in the developmental policy.<sup>49</sup> This argument of the instrumentalization of women's bodies and

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<sup>42</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*. 3rd edition. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Grimes, Seamus. 'From Population Control to "Reproductive Rights": Ideological Influences in Population Policy'.

<sup>45</sup> McIntosh, C. Alison, and Jason L. Finkle. "The Cairo Conference on Population and Development: A New Paradigm?".

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Foster, Emma A. 'International Sustainable Development Policy: (Re)Producing Sexual Norms through Eco-Discipline'.

<sup>48</sup> Wilson, Kalpana. "In the Name of Reproductive Rights: Race, Neoliberalism and the Embodied Violence of Population Policies." *New Formations* 91, no. 91 (April 1, 2017): 50–68.

<sup>49</sup> Nandagiri, Rishita. 'What's so Troubling about "Voluntary" Family Planning Anyway? A Feminist Perspective', Foster, Emma A. 'International Sustainable Development Policy: (Re)Producing Sexual Norms through Eco-Discipline'. , Horn, Denise M. 'Locating Security in the Womb'.

underlying theories are further discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis.

While a body of academic literature is dedicated to the discourse surrounding family planning programs, there is a gap in the empirical research concerning the extent to which the logic of population control and accompanying concerns influence the developmental policy and determine aid allocation. Building on the critical analysis of the SRHR discourse and policies, this thesis aims to explain the motivations of the most prominent actor in the field of international development in this context. Following the existing studies, the thesis aims to contribute to the understanding of donors' motivation in the sector-specific aid allocation and the role of various factors in this regard.

## 2. Family planning in the global development agenda

This part of the thesis provides a context for the following analysis. First, it presents a historical development of the international family planning programs, which is important for the understanding of the contemporary agenda. Then it proceeds to describe the current international framework regarding family planning in development. Lastly, this section is concerned with the United States as a selected case and its role in the international context. It provides an overview of its developmental policy regarding SRHR and family planning as well as the domestic legislative framework that defines it.

### 2.1. Family planning as an instrument of population control

The topic of family planning became the subject of discussion in the context of international development after WWII with the rapid demographic growth driven mainly by developing countries.<sup>50</sup> Regarding this development, the population became widely understood as a problem, requiring the attention of the development experts and a globally coordinated response.<sup>51</sup> These concerns were accompanied by the resurfacing neo-Malthusian theories that warned against the danger of overpopulation and accompanied social, economic, and security threats associated with this phenomenon.<sup>52</sup> Demographic growth became understood as a threat not only to the economic development of developing countries but also to their political stability and ultimately to international security.<sup>53</sup> The sense of urgency was further highlighted by the narrative of the “population bomb”, which predicted dire consequences for humanity under the condition of finite resources if the demographic trend continues.<sup>54</sup> Population policies adopted at the time reflected those fears and their primary focus on regulating population growth heavily emphasized limiting fertility of women in developing countries, often at the expense of their health and safety.<sup>55</sup> Following the advancement of contraceptive technologies in the 1960s, which allowed for

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<sup>50</sup> Donaldson, Peter J. *Nature Against Us: The United States and the World Population Crisis, 1965-1980*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990 p.2

<sup>51</sup> Bhatia, Rajani, Jade S. Sasser, Diana Ojeda, Anne Hendrixson, Sarojini Nadimpally, and Ellen E. Foley. ‘A Feminist Exploration of “Populationism”: Engaging Contemporary Forms of Population Control’. *Gender, Place & Culture* 27, no. 3 (3 March 2020): 333–50.

<sup>52</sup> Frey, Marc. ‘Neo-Malthusianism and Development: Shifting Interpretations of a Contested Paradigm’. *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 1 (March 2011): 75–97.

<sup>53</sup> Yanoshik, Kim, and Judy Norsigian. ‘Contraception, Control, and Choice: International Perspectives’. In *Healing Technology: Feminist Perspectives*, 61–92. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989

<sup>54</sup> Ehrlich, Paul R., and Anne H. Ehrlich. "The population bomb revisited." *The electronic journal of sustainable development* 1, no. 3 (2009): 63-71.

<sup>55</sup> Yanoshik, Kim, and Judy Norsigian. ‘Contraception, Control, and Choice: International Perspectives’

their mass distribution, the number of family planning programs grew and more financial resources became available to the growing population movement, especially from the United States.<sup>56</sup>

While programs distributing contraception had the potential to improve the conditions of women and allow them to have greater control over their reproduction, with the demographic objective in the center, the well-being or reproductive autonomy of women, whose bodies were subjects of the policies, were sidelined or even overtly disregarded.<sup>57</sup> The primary objective of demographic control was projected into the practice, with priority given to effectivity leading to the preference for long-lasting contraceptive methods, such as injectable contraception, IUDs, or sterilization, which generally limited the control of the user and made it more complicated to discontinue in case of negative side effects or wish to get pregnant.<sup>58</sup> Those methods were promoted even if they were not suitable for the conditions of the recipient country and the capacities of its health care system, which led to inadequate health care and put women at greater risk of complications.<sup>59</sup>

During this period, we can observe multiple examples of large-scale coercion and abuse associated with the population programs. Among the examples are sterilization campaigns that took place in Bangladesh, India, or Brazil, where 44 percent of women of reproductive age were sterilized by 1986.<sup>60</sup> In India, massive sterilization camps were introduced in the 1970s in response to the lack of progress of the initial population programs to curb population growth.<sup>61</sup> A large number of women were subjected to sterilization also in Bangladesh or Puerto Rico without proper informed consent.<sup>62</sup> The long-lasting contraceptive methods were routinely administered in the circumstances of lacking information, limited choice regarding the preferred method, and without initial medical exams or following check-ups.<sup>63</sup> Under such conditions of misuse of contraceptive

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<sup>56</sup> Finkle, Jason L., and C. Alison McIntosh. "United Nations Population Conferences: Shaping the Policy Agenda for the Twenty-First Century." *Studies in Family Planning* 33, no. 1 (2002): 11–23.

<sup>57</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*, p. 260.

<sup>58</sup> Yanoshik, Kim, and Judy Norsigian. 'Contraception, Control, and Choice: International Perspectives'.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*, p. 261.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>62</sup> Smyth, Ines. 'Gender Analysis of Family Planning: Beyond the Feminist vs. Population Control Debate'. *Feminist Economics* 2, no. 2 (1 July 1996): 63–86.

<sup>63</sup> Yanoshik, Kim, and Judy Norsigian. 'Contraception, Control, and Choice: International Perspectives'.

technologies, we can argue that women were losing control over their reproduction rather than gaining the freedom to make autonomous reproductive choices.

The logic of population control as crucial for economic development was widely embraced also by international institutions such as the UN and the World Bank, which dedicated a large amount of resources to population programs under the assumption that high fertility rates undermined the efforts to improve the conditions of the developing countries.<sup>64</sup> Even though the developing countries were voicing their doubts about population growth as a source of underdevelopment and criticized this narrative for diverting attention from the global economic order that perpetuates economic inequalities, their concerns were not reflected by the Western countries having an overwhelming influence in setting the development agenda.<sup>65</sup>

## **2.2. Putting women's health and rights at the forefront – The Cairo Program of Action**

The important moment for the SRHR in international development was marked by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 which established a new framing of the SRHR in development and shifted the focus from the population policies to women's empowerment and their bodily autonomy.<sup>66</sup> During this conference, 179 signing countries agreed on the Program of Action which established a discourse that denounced the previous policies centered around the demographic targets and put forward women's health and the right to control their reproduction and sexual relations.<sup>67</sup> From the previous narrow focus, Cairo brought new issues and redefined the agenda stressing “the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing, and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so”.<sup>68</sup> Even though the Cairo Program of Action is non-binding, it has been continuously

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<sup>64</sup> Sai, Fred T., and Lauren A. Chester. *The World Bank's Role in Shaping Third World Population Policy*. World Bank Publications, 1990. p. 1-3

<sup>65</sup> Grimes, Seamus. “From Population Control to ‘Reproductive Rights’: Ideological Influences in Population Policy.”

<sup>66</sup> Cohen, Susan A., and Cory L. Richards. ‘The Cairo Consensus: Population, Development and Women’. *Family Planning Perspectives* 26, no. 6 (1994): 272–77.

<sup>67</sup> Roseman, Mindy Jane, and Laura Reichenbach. “International Conference on Population and Development at 15 Years: Achieving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for All?” *American Journal of Public Health* 100, no. 3 (March 2010): 403–6.

<sup>68</sup> United Nations, “Programme of Action”, adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, September 1994.



reaffirmed by the subsequent international documents and its language has been broadly accepted and often referenced in the documents and policies regarding family planning and SRHR.<sup>69</sup> This radical shift in the language marks a shift to adopting the human rights framework in international population agenda and distancing of the subsequent programs from past abuses.<sup>70</sup>

Undoubtedly significant in this discursive change, but nevertheless the Cairo Program of Action cannot be understood as unambiguously unproblematic. Regardless of the revolutionary shift that finally recognized women's health and rights as central in the population programs, many remained skeptical about its potential to bring a substantial change to the practice of family planning.<sup>71</sup> This criticism was underlined by the fact that the representatives of the population control movement accepted the language of the Cairo Program of Action and during the negotiations cooperated with the representatives of the feminist movement, which Smyth sees as an expression of instrumentalism from the population movement of the time providing them with newly-gained legitimacy for their objectives, now wrapped in the language of women's well-being.<sup>72</sup> The alliance between feminists and population control proponents during ICPD also illustrates the complicated character of family planning and its instrumentalization as the agenda brings together various actors arguing for women's empowerment with vastly differing motivations sharing the same discourse.

### **2.3. Family planning in the development agenda following the Cairo Program of Action**

The shift towards the right-based approach was reinforced by the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, which reaffirmed the Cairo agenda and its objectives.<sup>73</sup> But despite the promising development of the 1990s, the subsequent major document defining the framework for the development agenda, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

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<sup>69</sup> Langer, Ana. 'Cairo after 12 Years: Successes, Setbacks, and Challenges'. *The Lancet* 368, no. 9547 (4 November 2006): 1552–54.

<sup>70</sup> Bhatia, Rajani, Jade S. Sasser, Diana Ojeda, Anne Hendrixson, Sarojini Nadimpally, and Ellen E. Foley. 'A Feminist Exploration of "Populationism": Engaging Contemporary Forms of Population Control'

<sup>71</sup> McIntosh, C. Alison, and Jason L. Finkle. "The Cairo Conference on Population and Development: A New Paradigm?"

<sup>72</sup> Smyth, Ines. "Gender Analysis of Family Planning: Beyond the Feminist vs. Population Control Debate."

<sup>73</sup> Hulme, David. "Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals: Politics, Ethics, Evidence and an 'Unholy Alliance.'" SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY, February 1, 2010.

setting the targets for the time period 2000-2015 at first completely omitted SRHR-related goals and only after criticism from the activists and NGOs included limited goals of improvement in maternal health in 2008.<sup>74</sup> Many authors such as Yumin and Falb criticized the inadequacy of the MDGs and its only later added goal of improved maternal health, both for isolating the issue from the larger debate and focusing on inappropriate indicators.<sup>75</sup>

Although more comprehensive targets related to SRHR were included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that followed MDGs with setting the agenda for the period 2015-2030, they remain criticized for only limiting their focus to certain indicators, omitting the complex nature of the family planning and SRHR and its realization.<sup>76</sup> Even if the scope of the SRHR-related goals was broadened, some authors also later pointed out the limitations of this target-focused framework and the limited scope of selected indicators.<sup>77</sup> Still, we can see the improvement with the inclusion of family planning in the broader context and without sole focus on contraceptive intake, with the third goal of Sustainable Developing Goals labeled "Good Health and Well-being", which includes target 3.7 aiming to “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information, and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs”.<sup>78</sup>

Following Cairo, the demographic goals have been removed from the discourse surrounding family planning in the development, and current family planning programs are overwhelmingly defined in the language of women’s rights, health, and empowerment, generally referencing the agenda of the Cairo Plan of Action.<sup>79</sup> In the same breath, they also highlight the positive impact of family planning on economic development, environmental

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Yamin, Alicia Ely, and Kathryn L Falb. “Counting What We Know; Knowing What to Count – Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Maternal Health, and the Millennium Development Goals.” *Nordic Journal of Human Rights* 30, no. 3 (December 19, 2012): 350–71.

<sup>76</sup> Zuccala, Elizabeth, and Richard Horton. “Addressing the Unfinished Agenda on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the SDG Era.” *The Lancet* 391, no. 10140 (June 30, 2018): 2581–83.

<sup>77</sup> Zuccala, Elizabeth, and Richard Horton. “Addressing the Unfinished Agenda on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the SDG Era.”, Yamin, Alicia Ely. “Power, Politics and Knowledge Claims: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the SDG Era.” *Global Policy* 10, no. S1 (2019): 52–60.

<sup>78</sup> Starrs, Ann M, Alex C Ezeh, Gary Barker, Alaka Basu, Jane T Bertrand, Robert Blum, Awa M Coll-Seck, et al. ‘Accelerate Progress—Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for All: Report of the Guttmacher–Lancet Commission’. *The Lancet* 391, no. 10140 (June 2018): 2642–92.

<sup>79</sup> Bhatia, Rajani, Jade S. Sasser, Diana Ojeda, Anne Hendrixson, Sarojini Nadimpally, and Ellen E. Foley. ‘A Feminist Exploration of “Populationism”: Engaging Contemporary Forms of Population Control’. *Gender, Place & Culture* 27, no. 3 (March 2020): 333–50.

sustainability, and political stability, implying an understanding of family planning as an instrument to address a whole variety of challenges of international development.<sup>80</sup> Although international family planning stresses its commitment to voluntariness, the practice of the programs remains understudied.<sup>81</sup> Senderowitz argues that coercion still exists in the programs even though it's more covert than the past abuses and to understand the phenomena we have to redefine coercion as a spectrum of individual and structural pressures rather than a simple binary.<sup>82</sup> In her study women interviewed about their experience with the family planning programs reported a range of practices that could be considered coercive including “biased or directive counseling, dramatically limited contraceptive method mix, scare tactics, provision of false medical information, refusal to remove provider-dependent methods, and the non-consented provision of long-acting methods”.<sup>83</sup>

Except for the Sustainable Development Goals that set out the agenda for international development, another influential global initiative Family Planning 2020 (FP2020) was established at the 2012 London Summit on Family Planning, organized by USAID, UNFPA, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.<sup>84</sup> The main aim of this initiative is to reach the goal of 120 million additional users of modern contraceptives by the year 2020.<sup>85</sup> Setting up such a quantitative goal is regarded as quite controversial in regard to family planning as was acknowledged even by the experts preparing the agenda, although they argue that the set goal serves to better mobilize resources and their primary focus is on addressing women’s needs and providing quality care.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, the program and its quantitative targets were criticized for incentivization to increase contraceptive uptake which has the potential to be coercive.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Nandagiri, Rishita. ‘What’s so Troubling about “Voluntary” Family Planning Anyway? A Feminist Perspective’.

<sup>81</sup> Senderowicz, Leigh. “‘I Was Obligated to Accept’: A Qualitative Exploration of Contraceptive Coercion”. *Social Science & Medicine* 239 (1 October 2019): 112531.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Hendrixson, Anne. ‘Population Control in the Troubled Present: The “120 by 20” Target and Implant Access Program’. *Development and Change* 50, no. 3 (2019): 786–804.

<sup>85</sup> Brown, Win, Nel Druce, Julia Bunting, Scott Radloff, Desmond Koroma, Srishti Gupta, Brian Siems, Monica Kerrigan, Dan Kress, and Gary L. Darmstadt. ‘Developing the “120 by 20” Goal for the Global FP2020 Initiative’. *Studies in Family Planning* 45, no. 1 (2014): 73–84.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Hendrixson, Anne. ‘Population Control in the Troubled Present: The “120 by 20” Target and Implant Access Program’.

In international development agenda, family planning still has a complicated standing due to its interrelation with the cultural and religious norms related to sexuality, reproduction, and gender.<sup>88</sup> Sexual and reproductive rights are consistently challenged by conservative and religious actors and women's bodies remain a site of ideological conflicts with detrimental consequences for their health and autonomy.<sup>89</sup> While there is general support in the international forums to reduce maternal mortality, a large coalition of actors from Holy See, states to NGOs protest the right to abortion, which is considered especially controversial.<sup>90</sup> The practice of the family planning programs is also affected by the local law and social norms and the need to address the prevalent gender inequalities that prevent women from the realization of their sexual and reproductive rights and access to sexual and reproductive health care.<sup>91</sup>

## 2.4. Family planning in the development policy of the United States

The United States has been selected as a case for the analysis for its current position in global development and international family planning as well as for the role it played historically in shaping this agenda. As the largest donor of the development aid, providing an overwhelming majority of aid directed to the international family planning programs its influence in this area cannot be overstated. Not only does the US provide most of the funding for family planning globally, but also has a great impact in setting the agenda and establishing norms in this regard.<sup>92</sup> The table 1 below shows the amount of Official Development Aid provided by the United States in the analyzed period of 2010-2020 compared to the overall amount dedicated to international family planning by all donors combined. We can observe that even though the data show a decreasing trend in the share of the United States, it is still responsible for a large portion. Up until 2018 the United States provided more than 50% of the yearly funding.

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<sup>88</sup> Starrs, Ann M, Alex C Ezech, Gary Barker, Alaka Basu, Jane T Bertrand, Robert Blum, Awa M Coll-Seck, et al. 'Accelerate Progress—Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for All: Report of the Guttmacher– Lancet Commission'. *The Lancet* 391, no. 10140 (June 2018): 2642–92. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)30293-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)30293-9).

<sup>89</sup> Zuccala, Elizabeth, and Richard Horton. 'Addressing the Unfinished Agenda on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the SDG Era'. *The Lancet* 391, no. 10140 (30 June 2018): 2581–83. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)30890-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)30890-0).

<sup>90</sup> Starrs, Ann M, Alex C Ezech, Gary Barker, Alaka Basu, Jane T Bertrand, Robert Blum, Awa M Coll-Seck, et al. 'Accelerate Progress—Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for All: Report of the Guttmacher– Lancet Commission'

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

Table 1 – ODA dedicated to family planning by the United States, 2010-2020 (in millions USD)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>United States</b>	<b>530.57</b>	<b>624.88</b>	<b>574.35</b>	<b>683.00</b>	<b>597.29</b>	<b>717.83</b>	<b>505.69</b>	<b>525.02</b>	<b>657.46</b>	<b>442.86</b>	<b>424.07</b>
Total - official donors	595.77	687.01	830.21	842.51	958.28	959.25	759.09	910.80	1,137.98	1,023.69	883.36
US-provided share of funding	89.1%	91.0%	69.2%	81.1%	62.3%	74.8%	66.6%	57.6%	57.8%	43.3%	48.0%

Source: OECD.stat

The role of the United States is significant also from the historical perspective. As the threat of population growth became widely accepted in the United States, it soon came to the forefront of the effort to control the population in the 1960s and began to fund substantially the effort to research and distribute contraceptives.<sup>93</sup> The first programs focused on the distribution of contraceptives were started by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1965, which became incredibly influential in the international promotion of population control and related interventions globally.<sup>94</sup> The United States had a significant impact not only through its developmental programs but also exerted influence through the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which it helped to establish in 1969 and provided the majority of funding for this agency.<sup>95</sup> The United States remained the most influential proponent of population control up until 1984 when the official position of the United States changed to understanding population growth as a “neutral phenomenon”<sup>96</sup> Although some authors argue that population control prevailed as a guiding principle of its policies.<sup>97</sup>

The way the population growth was conceptualized as a threat in the U.S. foreign policy and

<sup>93</sup> Yanoshik, Kim, and Judy Norsigian. ‘Contraception, Control, and Choice: International Perspectives’.

<sup>94</sup> Donaldson, Peter J. *Nature Against Us: The United States and the World Population Crisis, 1965-1980*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990 p.2

<sup>95</sup> Eager, Paige Whaley. ‘From Population Control to Reproductive Rights: Understanding Normative Change in Global Population Policy (1965–1994)’. *Global Society* 18, no. 2 (1 April 2004): 145–73.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Horn, Denise M. ‘Locating Security in the Womb’., Hendrixson, Anne. ‘Population Control in the Troubled Present: The “120 by 20” Target and Implant Access Program’.

family planning was used as an instrument to achieve self-interest is evidenced by the document National Security Memorandum 200 adopted in 1975, which endorsed population control as a tool to suppress dissent and safeguard US access to natural resources located in the developing world.<sup>98</sup> This memorandum argued for the conditioning of food aid by the adoption of the national population control programs.<sup>99</sup>

For the understanding of U.S. policy and aid allocation, it is necessary to be familiar with the laws and policies that shape the way the funds are allocated. For that reason, the following part provides a short overview of the U.S. legislative framework that significantly influences the family planning aid allocation.

First, the United States policy has to be understood in the context of domestic politics as the domestic extremely polarized debates concerning reproductive rights are projected in legislation that guides the foreign policy. One of the important pieces of legislation that guides the provision of funds is the Helms Amendment passed in 1973, which prohibits the use of U.S. funds to perform abortion.<sup>100</sup> This legislative act was passed the same year that abortion became legal on the federal level in the United States, giving rise to the powerful anti-abortion lobby.<sup>101</sup>

Another important policy related to abortion is the Mexico City policy, which excludes foreign NGOs providing abortions or abortion-related services from receiving any funding from the US government.<sup>102</sup> First instituted by Ronald Reagan in 1984, the policy has been periodically rescinded by each following democratic president, only to be reinstated by each following president of the Republican Party.<sup>103</sup> Originally applied only to the funds related to health assistance distributed by USAID, under the presidency of Donald Trump in 2017

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<sup>98</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*. p.126.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Goodwin, Michele. 'Challenging the Rhetorical Gag and Trap: Reproductive Capacities, Rights, and the Helms Amendment A Fear of Too Much Justice: Equal Protection and the Social Sciences Thirty Years of McCleskey v. Kemp Symposium: Overcoming McCleskey's Doctrinal Legacy'. *Northwestern University Law Review* 112, no. 6 (2018 2017): 1417–56.

<sup>101</sup> Nina J. Crimm, "The Global Gag Rule: Undermining National Interests by Doing unto Foreign Women and NGOs What Cannot Be Done at Home", *Cornell International Law*, Vol. 40, Issue 3 (Fall 2007): 588-629.

<sup>102</sup> Nina Brooks, Eran Bendavid, Grant Miller, „USA aid policy and induced abortion in sub-Saharan Africa: an analysis of the Mexico City Policy“, *The Lancet Global Health*, Vol.7, Issue 8 (August 2019): 1046-1053.

<sup>103</sup> Cincotta, Richard P., and Barbara B. Crane. 'The Mexico City Policy and U.S. Family Planning Assistance'. *Science* 294, no. 5542 (19 October 2001): 525–26.

the policy has been substantially expanded to encompass all aid distributed by the United States agencies.<sup>104</sup> As summarized in the scoping review of the articles focusing on the impact of Mexico City policy on global health by Mavodza, Goldman, and Cooper, the Mexico City Policy has grave consequences not only for the availability of abortion but also for family planning and reproductive health, as NGOs refusing to abide by those rule that forbid them even from providing information about the abortion as a method of family planning, lose all U.S. funding.<sup>105</sup> This policy in effect reduces the availability of reproductive health care, especially in countries that are more reliant on NGOs and foreign funding in this regard.<sup>106</sup> In this case, we can argue that family planning programs are used to promote partisan political interest while women in developing countries are bearing the cost.

Another policy that is guided by the partisan divisions of the domestic politics is the Kemp-Kasten Amendment which “prohibits funding to any organization or program that determined by the president, supports or participates in the management of programs of coercive abortions or involuntary sterilization”<sup>107</sup> and has been applied to periodically deny funding to the UNFPA. This amendment has been specifically applied only in relation to UNFPA under the conclusion that its activities in China constitute a violation of the policy, while the agency denies its involvement.<sup>108</sup>

Even though it can be argued that U.S. policy regarding abortion is going against the argument of the prevailing population control, opposite to imposing contraception, both activists of the pro-life movement and population control movement share striving to limit women’s reproductive choices and pursuit of their own goals thought women’s bodies. In the case of the United States where abortion has a specific position in the domestic debates, the issue is not necessarily related to contraception.

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<sup>104</sup> Schaaf, Marta, Emily Maistrellis, Hana Thomas, and Bergen Cooper. ““Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance”? Towards a Framework for Assessing the Health Systems Impact of the Expanded Global Gag Rule”. *BMJ Global Health* 4, no. 5 (1 September 2019): e001786.

<sup>105</sup> Mavodza, Constancia, Rebecca Goldman, and Bergen Cooper. ‘The Impacts of the Global Gag Rule on Global Health: A Scoping Review’. *Global Health Research and Policy* 4, no. 1 (29 August 2019): 26.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> KFF. ‘UNFPA Funding & Kemp-Kasten: An explainer’. *KFF website*, 30 September 2022.

<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/fact-sheet/unfpa-funding-kemp-kasten-an-explainer/>.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

In their current policies, the United States is proclaiming its commitment to the voluntary character of all of their family planning programs, with multiple legislative provisions supporting those principles such as the Tiahrt Amendment passed in 1998.<sup>109</sup> Although the the implementation of this principle in its programs have not been studied.

Remaining the most significant donor in the field, in 2020 the United States was involved in more than 30 countries, where they directly supported family planning and reproductive health programs. In the analyzed period the United States was also involved in the Family Planning 2020 and supported its goals.<sup>110</sup> During the analyzed time period, the United States were providing funds to UNFPA in the period 2010 – 2016, while the funding was suspended between 2017-2020. The distinction is aplicable also to the provision of funding to the foreign NGOs that provide abortion-related services, which received resources from the United States only until 2017 (within the selected time period) when Donald Trump reinstated the Mexico City Policy.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Blanchfield, Luisa. ‘Abortion and Family Planning-Related Provisions in U.S. Foreign Assistance Law and Policy’, Congressional Research Servis Report, April 5, 2015.

<sup>110</sup> USAID, ‘Family Planning and Reproductive Health’, 30 October 2020. <https://2017-2020.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/family-planning>

<sup>111</sup> ‘Presidential Memorandum Regarding the Mexico City Policy – The White House’. Accessed 3 January 2024. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-memorandum-regarding-mexico-city-policy/>.



### **3. Theoretical foundation**

This part of the thesis problematizes family planning and its role in international development. In history as well as in contemporary practice we can observe linking of the family planning with a range of objectives with the presumed possibility to address those issues through reducing population. In the following part, the thesis identifies the main concerns connected to population growth presented in the literature. First, the thesis outlines the concept of instrumentalization of women's bodies in the development policy and then proceeds to present the arguments that underlie the objectives pursued through population reduction, and therefore through family planning. Based on the review of existing literature the following issues were identified: economic goals, environmental goals, and security goals. The concerns identified in this part of the thesis are operationalized and included in the model in the following analytical part.

#### **3.1. The ambiguous role of family planning in international development**

While access to contraception and family planning services is a key prerequisite for women's bodily autonomy and gender equality, it can also be coercive as shown in the previous chapter, especially if quantitative targets or incentives are introduced into the programs.<sup>112</sup> The history of family planning is marked by coercion, forced sterilization, and prioritization of long-acting reversible contraception without adequate accompanying medical care, but also by racialized and gendered narratives positioning women from developing countries as a cause and remedy for the economic or ecological problems.<sup>113</sup> While family planning programs can be empowering for women and improve their quality of life, those programs can also reduce women to means through which to achieve certain goals, while disregarding their well-being and bodily autonomy as was overtly the case with the earlier population control programs.<sup>114</sup> Family planning is undoubtedly crucial for women's health and rights as acknowledged by the prevalent discourse embodied by the Cairo Program of Action. Access to family planning can allow women to exercise their bodily autonomy, make free

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<sup>112</sup> Nandagiri, Rishita. "What's so Troubling about 'Voluntary' Family Planning Anyway? A Feminist Perspective."

<sup>113</sup> Hendrixson, Anne. 'Population Control in the Troubled Present: The "120 by 20" Target and Implant Access Program'.

<sup>114</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*. 3rd edition. Haymarket Books, 2016

reproductive decisions, and can also lead to better health outcomes.<sup>115</sup> But for the programs to have this effect, the issue has to be approached in a comprehensive manner and with women's rights at their centre.<sup>116</sup> While family planning can be both positive and negative for women, their autonomy, and health, the almost universal acceptance of the feminist language and the complex character of the issue complicates the distinction, especially as the motivations of its proponents are not always transparent.

### **3.2. Empowering women in the development or pursuit of objectives through women**

There is tension between women's rights in the international family programs and the other objectives that are linked to population control and are pursued through those programs. The past of coercive population control serves as a reminder of the possible abuses when economic and security goals are pursued through women's bodies. The concept of the instrumentalization of women's bodies is not limited to the topic of family planning, but in multiple regards, women are understood in the current developmental policies as a solution to a variety of developmental challenges, regardless of the role of the broader context of global development. Gender policies are routinely promoted as an instrument to achieve a whole variety of developmental goals, from economic development to children's education or governance.<sup>117</sup> At the time of the gender mainstreaming into the development policy, this might warrant skepticisms about such policies as Cornwall observes that "much of the narrative focuses on instrumental gains—what women can do for development rather than what development can do for women."<sup>118</sup>

While those developmental goals can be all positive, putting the responsibility for a whole spectre of developmental goals on women of developing countries usually omits the structural forces that are responsible for those problems or reinforce them. For example, while empowering women in developing countries is an admirable goal, associating it with

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<sup>115</sup> Starrs, Ann M, Alex C Ezech, Gary Barker, Alaka Basu, Jane T Bertrand, Robert Blum, Awa M Coll-Seck, et al. 'Accelerate Progress—Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for All: Report of the Guttmacher–Lancet Commission'.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Starbird, Ellen, Maureen Norton, and Rachel Marcus. 'Investing in Family Planning: Key to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals'. *Global Health: Science and Practice* 4, no. 2 (20 June 2016): 191–210.

<sup>118</sup> Cornwall, Andrea. 'Women's Empowerment: What Works?' *Journal of International Development* 28, no. 3 (2016): 342–59.

climate change mitigation diverts attention from the mass pollution of the environment in the global north and shifts attention to the women in developing countries, whose fertility reduction is associated with the solution. This understanding of the role of women in developmental policy also puts a condition on gender equality or women's reproductive freedom as a goal worth pursuing only if that fulfills the broader agenda. One such example is the neoliberal concept of women's empowerment in the context of international development espoused by the World Bank and its concept of "gender equality as smart economics".<sup>119</sup> In this context, gender equality is not deemed a pursuit valuable on its own but rather an instrument of generating capital, and gaining access to a larger pool of human capital.<sup>120</sup> The same can be connected to family planning and the global population. As Hartman observes "The belief that overpopulation is the root cause of poverty, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, migration, violent conflict, and even climate change is pervasive", placing the responsibility of ameliorating those issues on women and their reproductive choices.<sup>121</sup> This understanding of the population leads some to the conclusion that „investing in family planning is development „best buy““, which may prompt skepticism about the centrality of women's health and empowerment in family planning programs.<sup>122</sup>

Not unprecedented is also the use of the language of women's rights and empowerment as a discursive instrument to justify certain policies and behavior. In the case of the United States, it famously mobilized the public by appealing to women's rights in case of the invasion to Afghanistan in 2001.<sup>123</sup> In the developmental policies the term "women's empowerment" became a "buzzword" deployed by a range of actors from state governments to NGOs and international corporations and its use is increasingly criticized by feminist scholars for its depoliticization and loss of its previous emancipatory potential.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> 'Gender Equality Is Smart Economics. Yet, Its Progress Remains Slow', 1 March 2022.

<sup>120</sup> Wilson, Kalpana. 'Re-Centring "Race" in Development: Population Policies and Global Capital Accumulation in the Era of the SDGs'. *Globalizations* 14, no. 3 (16 April 2017): 432–49.

<sup>121</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*. 3rd edition. Haymarket Books, 2016, p.9.

<sup>122</sup> Starbird, Ellen, Maureen Norton, and Rachel Marcus. 'Investing in Family Planning: Key to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals'. *Global Health: Science and Practice* 4, no. 2 (20 June 2016): 191–210.

<sup>123</sup> Berry, Kim. 'The Symbolic Use of Afghan Women in the War on Terror'. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 27, no. 2 (2003): 137–60.

<sup>124</sup> Biewener, Carole, and Marie-Helen Bacque. "Feminism and the politics of empowerment in international development." *Air & Space Power Journal-Africa and Francophonie* 6, no. 2 (2015): 58-75.

In the existing policies, various positive effects are attributed to family planning, as a reduction in the population is supposed to ameliorate certain global challenges. Despite the feminist language that covers the programs and policies, they can be actually harmful if preference is given to pursuing other goals and the actual provision of sexual and reproductive healthcare is relegated to the byproduct. The main concerns associated with population growth are stressed both by the organizations and authors that urge for accelerated family planning efforts with the primary objective of population reduction and by governments and international institutions that embraced the human rights discourse. Those concerns are discussed below, and in the next part of the thesis operationalized and included in the model testing their influence on the allocation of aid focused on family planning.

### **3.2.1. Family planning and environmental sustainability**

One of the frequent arguments associated with family planning programs is their conceptualization as a way to preserve the environment linking the decrease in population growth with conserving vital resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>125</sup> The argument for “managed population reduction as a key enabler of sustainable development” postulate that the failure to do so will worsen environmental degradation and hamper the development goal of poverty reduction.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, it is argued that it should be among the top priorities of the development agenda.<sup>127</sup> The argument goes that a reduction in population growth is desirable to prevent depletion of the natural resources. Valentine sums up the argument as follows: “Growing demand for food, fuel, and freshwater leads to habitat destruction and land, water, and air pollution. Increasing access to voluntary family planning and comprehensive reproductive health care is one way to help address these global challenges”<sup>128</sup>. This argument follows the rhetoric of the population control movement and even if the environmental movement distances itself from the past coercive policies, the connection behind is very similar.

Apart from soil degradation or lack of potable water the argument also states that with the

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<sup>125</sup> Cassils, J. Anthony. ‘Overpopulation, Sustainable Development, and Security: Developing an Integrated Strategy’. *Population and Environment* 25, no. 3 (2004): 171–94.

<sup>126</sup>Valentine, Scott Victor. ‘Disarming the Population Bomb’. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, 21 April 2010.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

increase in world population also rise the greenhouse gas emissions, which further contribute to climate change and therefore, it is vital to consider the population in relation to the global climate goals.<sup>129</sup> However, we have to note that this argument largely ignores the reality of the current distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which is concentrated in the global north emitting multiple of the amount per capita compared to the developing countries.<sup>130</sup> In this argument, the responsibility is placed on the women in the developing countries, even though developed countries are responsible for the majority of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and people in the developing countries are already ones bearing the cost of climate change.

While these concerns are not new, in the context of the escalating climate change and growing attention to this problem, the question of demographic growth and its climate and environmental impacts is gaining more traction. The connection between the population is stressed for example by the 2014 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which argues that „Globally, economic and population growth continue to be the most important drivers of increases in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion”<sup>131</sup> The connection between the environmental degradation and the population growth is made also by the USAID which stated on its website among the benefits of the family planning that it “mitigates the impact of population dynamics on natural resources and state stability“.<sup>132</sup> In the above-mentioned statement, we can also see that the connection between the concern for environmental sustainability is related to also to security as the worsening environmental degradation is presumed to contribute to political instability and conflict by decreasing the availability of vital resources and worsening living conditions.<sup>133</sup>

While the relationship between population and environment is complex, with many factors

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<sup>129</sup> Starbird, Ellen, Maureen Norton, and Rachel Marcus. ‘Investing in Family Planning: Key to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals’. *Global Health: Science and Practice* 4, no. 2 (20 June 2016): 191–210.

<sup>130</sup> Lee, Chew Tin, Haslenda Hashim, Chin Siong Ho, Yee Van Fan, and Jiří Jaromír Klemesš. ‘Sustaining the Low-Carbon Emission Development in Asia and beyond: Sustainable Energy, Water, Transportation and Low-Carbon Emission Technology’. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Bridging the Gaps for Accelerating Low Carbon Actions in Asia, 146 (10 March 2017): 1–13.

<sup>131</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2014. Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II, and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Geneva: IPCC., cited in Ojeda, Diana, Jade S. Sasser, and Elizabeth Lunstrum. ‘Malthus’s Specter and the Anthropocene’. *Gender, Place & Culture* 27, no. 3 (3 March 2020): 316–32.

<sup>132</sup> ‘Family Planning and Reproductive Health | Archive - U.S. Agency for International Development’. Accessed November 20, 2023.

<sup>133</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. ‘Population, Environment, and Security: A New Trinity’. *Environment and Urbanization* 10, no. 2 (1 October 1998): 113–28.

and their interactions influencing the outcome, the thesis does not evaluate it. Rather than the extensive research dedicated to this topic, this chapter is more concerned with the political arguments for the decrease in population growth to mitigate climate change and environmental degradation. Therefore the hypothesis reflects the dominant narrative present in global development policy rather than the complex relation between population, environment, and other influencing factors. Reflecting the connections made in the development policy discourse the following hypothesis is formulated to be tested in the analytical part of the thesis.

H1: The level of environmental degradation in the recipient country has a significant positive effect on the amount of family planning aid received from the United States.

### **3.2.2. Family planning and economic interests**

Another concern associated with the population growth in the literature is the economic interest. To consider the economic interest of the donor country in slowing population growth we have to bring back the argument that desire for reduction of population did not disappear with Cairo and main development experts continue to argue that family planning is connected to the economic development. The logic behind this connection relies on the assumption of the limited natural resources which become strained with the rising population. This argument is also extended to the economic resources and goods and services. Apart from the concern for the developing countries economic situation which project to the well-being of its citizens, family planning can be also connected to the economic interests of the donors. This argument is among others presented by Boyd who argues that young women of the developing countries are viewed as human capital that can be mobilized for the benefit of the foreign investors if they are liberated from care and unpaid reproductive work associated with the childbearing.<sup>134</sup> As Wilson argues „extension and intensification of women’s labor (is) central to sustaining neoliberal capital accumulation“.<sup>135</sup> With the globally unequal distribution of resources, this mobilization of women’s labor primarily benefits the transnational corporations and states of the global

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<sup>134</sup> Boyd, Ginger Ging-Dwan. ‘The Girl Effect: A Neoliberal Instrumentalization of Gender Equality’ 15, no. 1 (2016): 146–80.

<sup>135</sup> Wilson, Kalpana. ‘Re-Centring “Race” in Development: Population Policies and Global Capital Accumulation in the Era of the SDGs’.

north.<sup>136</sup> The support for this argument is also found in the World Bank policy of investing in women as „smart economics“ which considers in its documents the „effect of the high fertility on the female labor supply“<sup>137</sup>

In the academic literature, another argument for the role of economic interest in the allocation of family planning aid was found, which connects the family planning programs to the interest of the pharmaceutical industry of the donor country, which massively profits from the family planning programs of the donor country.<sup>138</sup> Albeit due to the limited availability of the data, this argument is not included in the analysis.

To test the theory connecting the economic interest to population control and whether it's projected to the family planning policy in the selected case of the United States, it is assumed that the donor country would have greater economic interest in the case of the recipient country with the larger share of common trade. In line with the presented theory in such a case, the donor country can benefit more greatly from the enhanced supply of the undervalued labor of the women workers. Building on this connection between economic interest and the reduction in women's fertility the thesis formulates the following hypothesis.

H2: The trade relations with the recipient country have a significant positive effect on the amount of family planning aid received from the United States.

### **3.2.3. Family planning and global security**

Another argument for the international family programs connects population growth to global security as it is argued that the large young population in the country experiencing rapid demographic growth is prone to unrest which causes political instability.<sup>139</sup> Connected to this argument of “youth bulge” warning against the large number of young people in the population is the economic argument that states that the national economy is not able to support the large increases in population, leading to a number of societal problems that create

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<sup>136</sup> Boyd, Ginger Ging-Dwan. ‘The Girl Effect: A Neoliberal Instrumentalization of Gender Equality’

<sup>137</sup> Wilson, Kalpana. ‘Re-Centring “Race” in Development: Population Policies and Global Capital Accumulation in the Era of the SDGs’.

<sup>138</sup> Schultz, S., & Bendix, D. (2015). A revival of explicit population policy in development cooperation: The German government, Bayer, and the Gates foundation. *DifferenTakes*. No 89, Fall 2015.

<sup>139</sup> Farzanegan, Mohammad Reza, and Stefan Witthuhn. ‘Corruption and Political Stability: Does the Youth Bulge Matter?’ *European Journal of Political Economy* 49 (1 September 2017): 47–70.

discontent among the population causing political instability.<sup>140</sup> Connected to this issue is also the increase in migration from the affected country fueled by the above-mentioned challenges, which is often constructed as a threat in the countries of the global north.<sup>141</sup> Apart from the migration construction of which as a threat is especially prominent in the context of the foreign policy of the United States, in the selected case the instability attributed to the population growth has been also associated with restricting access to natural resources.<sup>142</sup> In the context of the security the political instability is also identified as a factor that contributes to the rise of international terrorism, a potential threat especially strongly stressed in the foreign policy of the United States during the time of the war on terror following attacks on the World Trade Center.<sup>143</sup> In this regard the argument linking the population growth with the political instability might be especially influential in the case of the United States and their security considerations. While the theory of the youth bulge oversimplifies the complexity of the demographic changes, the understanding of the population growth in the developing countries is still present, often accompanied by the racialized and gendered discourses.<sup>144</sup>

It should be noted that the theory of the „youth bulge“ is contrasted with the coexisting theory of the „demographic benefit“ that sees the increase in the share of the young population as an opportunity for economic growth and development under specific conditions when the country manages to use the potential and adapt to the changing demographic dynamics. Nevertheless, the theory still remains relevant in the development discourse and therefore is considered in the thesis, and based on its argumentation, the following hypothesis was formulated.

H3: The higher level of political instability in the country has a significant positive effect on the amount of family planning aid received from the United States.

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. ‘Rethinking Climate Refugees and Climate Conflict: Rhetoric, Reality and the Politics of Policy Discourse’. *Journal of International Development* 22, no. 2 (2010): 233–46.

<sup>142</sup> Horn, Denise M. ‘Locating Security in the Womb’

<sup>143</sup> Campos, Nauro F., and Martin Gassebner. ‘International Terrorism, Domestic Political Instability, and the Escalation Effect’. *Economics & Politics* 25, no. 1 (2013): 27–47.

<sup>144</sup> Wilson, Kalpana. ‘Re-Centring “Race” in Development: Population Policies and Global Capital Accumulation in the Era of the SDGs’.



### 3.2.4. Family planning and reproductive health

Apart from the above-mentioned interests associated with population control we have to also consider the concern for global health and women's rights realized through the family planning programs in accordance with the prevalent rhetoric of the Cairo Plan of Action and following international documents setting the development agenda. In the context of foreign aid, this motivation can be considered as altruistic, and while the existing research into the determinants of foreign aid allocation shows that the strategic interests of the donor country are the most significant in the majority of cases, it also shows that the need of the recipient country is considered by the donor and has a certain effect on the aid allocation. In the context of the family planning policies the main concern universally stressed in the global development agenda embodied by the MDGs and SDGs is women's reproductive health and especially maternal mortality which was initially included as a sole SRHR related goal in the MDGs.

Assuming that the donor country abides by its proclaimed development policy goals, then we can expect that the guiding principle behind the family planning programs that determine the allocation of resources is the concern for women's health, the following hypothesis would apply to the United States foreign aid allocation.

H4: The level of maternal mortality in the recipient country has a significant positive effect on the amount of family planning aid received from the United States

While considering the arguments for the necessity of family planning and reduction of population growth we have to acknowledge that they are often interrelated. In the case of the environmental concern, some proponents of this logic are not only concerned with deforestation erosion of soil, the greenhouse gas emissions but what is also connected to the argument are the expected consequences of the lack of resources or worsening climate conditions.<sup>145</sup> The link between environmental concerns related to the growing population and global security is visible for example in the fears of "climate refugees" and "climate conflict".<sup>146</sup> In the same way, the argument of political instability and unrest prompted by

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<sup>145</sup> Walker, Robert J. 'Population Growth and Its Implications for Global Security'. *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 75, no. 4 (2016): 980–1004.

<sup>146</sup> Hartmann, Betsy. 'Rethinking Climate Refugees and Climate Conflict: Rhetoric, Reality and the Politics

overpopulation can be extended to the presumed negative economic consequences and threat to the foreign investment of donors in the recipient country.

## 4. Methodology

Building on the historical context and the literature critical of the instrumentalization of women's bodies in the development policy the section is concerned with the empirical analysis of the determinants of the foreign aid dedicated to family planning of the United States in the time period of 2010-2020. To answer the research question of the thesis, this section analyses the extent to which have environmental factors, economic interests, and security concerns influence the allocation of foreign aid directed to family planning. After reviewing the methodological approaches of the existing literature concerned with the topic, this section presents a model of foreign aid allocation which will be used to determine the extent to which are the described factors determined the dependent variable. First this section discuss the method selected for the analysis, then it describes the variables included in the model and the logical connection between them and expected results. Finally, the results of the analysis are presented with their interpretation and discussion of the potential limitations.

### 4.1. Method of estimation

The research concerning the determinants of the foreign aid often examine three-dimensional data and is preoccupied with the comparing the patterns of aid allocation across donors. Varying methodological approaches have been applied in the study of the determinants of foreign aid. It is therefore possible to analyse the selected data through alternative methods. In selecting the appropriate method of the estimation, we have to account for possible challenges stemming from the character of the data.

One of the principal challenges connected with the panel data analyzed in the research of aid allocation is the potential sample selection bias, as donors usually do not allocate aid across all recipients, complicating the comparison across donors. Existing research offer multiple options to address this issue. One possibility is to use the Tobit model as Gang and Lehman or Bérthélemy and Tichit.<sup>147</sup> Although Hoeffler and Outram argue that existing research concerned with aid allocation which deploys Tobit model does not find significant

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<sup>147</sup> Gang, Ira N., and James A. Lehman. 'New Directions or Not: USAID in Latin America'. *World Development* 18, no. 5 (1 May 1990): 723–32., Bérthélemy, Jean-Claude, and Ariane Tichit. 'Bilateral Donors' Aid Allocation Decisions—a Three-Dimensional Panel Analysis'. *International Review of Economics & Finance, Aid Allocations and Development Financing*, 13, no. 3 (1 January 2004): 253–74.

differences compared to OLS estimation.<sup>148</sup> Other authors address the censored character of the data by using the two-stage estimations which apply the same set of explanatory variables, first to determine the selection and then the allocation.<sup>149</sup> Another possible technique would be use of the Heckmann model but as it relies on the ability to identify a variable that determines selection but not allocation it is not suitable as an estimation method in our case.<sup>150</sup>

Considering the not significant effect found in the case of the Tobit model, the unsuitability of the Heckman model, and the character of the analyzed data, the thesis uses the model used by Allesina and Dollar which relies on the OLS estimation method.

$$Aid_{ijt} = \alpha_i + \beta_i X_{ijt} + u_{ijt}$$

In the model,  $i$  represents donor,  $j$  recipient and  $t$  time.  $X_{ijt}$  denotes the vector of explanatory variables,  $\alpha_i$  is constant and  $u_{ijt}$  stands for error. It is important to account for the heterogeneity among the large set of developing countries included in the dataset and their specific characteristics that are not reflected in the explanatory variables. For this reason, after running a Hausman test country-fixed effects are introduced in the model. The previously conducted studies of the aid allocation show the importance of the fixed effect in the analysis in accounting for the unobserved characteristics of the recipient country.<sup>151</sup> Parallel to the OLS estimation inspired by Alesina and Dollar the thesis also includes the second estimation for the same dependent variable through which it aims to find the best-fitting model.

To observe whether the potential effect of the selected independent variables on the allocation of the family planning aid is sector-specific to the aid dedicated to the family planning and does not only follow the patterns manifested in the allocation of the aggregate aid the analysis described above is performed separately both on the aid dedicated to family planning and aggregate aid as dependent variables allowing for their comparison. This

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<sup>148</sup> Hoeffler, Anke, and Verity Outram. 'Need, Merit, or Self-Interest—What Determines the Allocation of Aid?' *Review of Development Economics* 15, no. 2 (2011): 237–50.

<sup>149</sup> Berthélemy, Jean-Claude. 'Bilateral Donors' Interest vs. Recipients' Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?' *Review of Development Economics* 10, no. 2 (2006): 179–94.

<sup>150</sup> Kennedy (2003)

<sup>151</sup> Hoeffler, Anke, and Verity Outram. 'Need, Merit, or Self-Interest—What Determines the Allocation of Aid?' *Review of Development Economics* 15, no. 2 (2011): 237–50.

allows for a more accurate interpretation of the results specific to the established research questions and evaluation of the hypotheses presented in the previous part of the thesis.

## 4.2. Data collection

The thesis analyses the factors that influenced the allocation of the bilateral Official Development Aid (ODA) specific to the sector of family planning over the period 2010-2020. The developing countries selected for the analysis are defined as ODA recipients according to the OECD information for the year 2010. While the data for all countries classified as developing in the time period were collected, in final model only the data for the countries that received the foreign aid dedicated to family planning were included in the analysis, due to the large amount of zero observations in the initial dataset and problems stemming from this issue. After this adjustment to the dataset 66 developing countries were included in the analysis. The thesis examines the panel data, which includes two dimensions of the recipient country and time.

The dependent variable is the volume of bilateral aid commitment of the United States to the recipient country classified by the Creditor Reporting System under the purpose code 13030 – family planning, which encompasses “Family planning services including counseling; information, education, and communication (IEC) activities; delivery of contraceptives; capacity building and training”.<sup>152</sup> The reported data are included in the model as commitments rather than disbursements as it is more suitable to convey the information about the donors' intentions with aid allocation and does not have to account for external factors that are beyond the donor's control. In the literature concerning aid allocation, this approach has been deployed by Bérthelemy or Tarp et al..<sup>153</sup> The variable of interest was converted into constant 2015 USD using the Consumer Price Index (CPI), to allow for the meaningful comparison. Explanatory variables reported in the dollar amount have also been converted to the constant 2015 USD through the same mechanism. The dependent variable is included in the analysis as a logarithm of the aid commitment to reduce its skewness. To

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<sup>152</sup> OECD, „Development finance classification“, Accessed 2 November 2023. <https://development-finance-codelists.oecd.org/Codeslist.aspx>

<sup>153</sup> Bérthelemy, Jean-Claude. ‘Bilateral Donors’ Interest vs. Recipients’ Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?’ *Review of Development Economics* 10, no. 2 (2006): 179–94, Tarp, Finn, Christian F. Bach, Henrik Hansen, and Søren Baunsgaard. ‘Danish Aid Policy: Theory and Empirical Evidence’. In *Foreign Aid: New Perspectives*, edited by Kanhaya L. Gupta, 149–69. Recent Economic Thought Series. Boston, MA: Springer US, 1999.

account for the fact that some recipients did not receive any funding, the logarithmic form of the variable was calculated as  $(aid+1)$  which preserved the zero values in the dataset.

The thesis is interested in a comparison of the effects of selected independent variables on the aid allocation of the family planning aid and total bilateral aid, to determine whether we can observe the sector-specific determinants that are related to the family aid programs. Therefore, we have to also define the second dependent variable that will be included in the second model. This variable aims to capture the aggregate aid allocated to the set of developing countries and is included in the model as a logarithm of the net ODA bilateral commitment of the United States to the recipient country as reported by the OECD Creditor Reporting system. Same as in the case of the aid directed at the family planning this variable is measured as commitments converted to 2015 constant USD.

The next section describes the explanatory variables included in the analysis.

### **4.3. Explanatory variables**

*Income* – In the existing research concerning the determinants of aid allocation, the variable is included to capture the needs of the recipient country. The variable is included in the model as GDP per capita as reported by the World Bank converted into constant 2015 USD. To reduce skewness this variable has been also included in the model in the logarithmic form. This variable serves as a control in the model to enhance the model fit and reduce potential omitted variable bias as the existing research indicates its significant influence on the aid allocation.

*Trade* – The variable captures the economic interests of the donor country, in the case of the following analysis, the United States. In line with the existing research that uses trade as a proxy for the economic interest, the thesis includes the donor's export to the recipient country operationalized as total value export as a percentage of the donor's GDP.<sup>154</sup> The data were collected from the UN Comtrade database and converted into percentages using the data about the donor's GDP from the database of the World Bank. As the bilateral trade

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<sup>154</sup> Berthélemy, Jean-Claude, and Ariane Tichit. 'Bilateral Donors' Aid Allocation Decisions—a Three-Dimensional Panel Analysis'. *International Review of Economics & Finance*, Aid Allocations and Development Financing, 13, no. 3 (1 January 2004): 253–74.

can increase in relation to the larger amount of given aid, to reduce the possibility of the feedback the variable is included in the model as lag t-1. The relation is expected to be positive based on the existing research finding a positive influence of the economic interests and donors' preference for the trading partners in the aid allocation and the theorized economic interests connected with family planning.

*Maternal mortality* – This variable represents the proclaimed goal of the development policies to improve maternal health which was prominently included in the MDG since 2007 and continues to be one of the most important aims of the development agenda in the era of Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>155</sup> Maternal health is regularly highlighted in the policy documents and progress in this regard is periodically monitored, and evaluated against set targets.<sup>156</sup> Maternal health is regularly highlighted in the policy documents concerning the family planning programs. The value of maternal mortality ratio is a reported estimate of maternal mortality parameters representing the number of maternal deaths per 100 000 live births as reported by the Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-agency Group created by cooperation of the WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group, and UNDESA/Population Division.<sup>157</sup> The dataset includes the point estimate of the measure in the variable. The relationship between maternal mortality and the dependent variable is expected to be positive, in line with the proclaimed developmental goals of the United States.

*Water Stress* – This variable serves as a proxy for environmental degradation. The variable represents the “freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources” as reported by the World Bank. Although this variable captures only part of the phenomena of environmental degradation, other measures that fit the relationship that this variable aims to capture were not found to be systematically reported. In line with the literature concerning population reduction and environmental concerns, the relationship with the dependent variable is expected to be positive as argued in the first hypothesis presented in the theoretical part of the thesis.

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<sup>155</sup> Hulme, David. “Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals: Politics, Ethics, Evidence and an ‘Unholy Alliance.’” SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY, February 1, 2010.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Trends in maternal mortality 2000 to 2020: estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNDESA/Population Division. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023

*Stability* – Variable measures “perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically motivated violence, including terrorism”. The national core of this indicator is recorded on a scale from -2,5 to 2,5, with lower number representing higher likelihood of the political instability. In the context of the model, the variable aims to capture the security interest and geopolitical consideration of the donor. According to the literature reviewed in the theoretical chapter, the variable is expected to be negatively associated with the dependent variable.

*Population* – This variable is included in the model as a control to prevent potential omitted variable bias following the analysis of the aid allocation by Berthélemy.<sup>158</sup> The population is included in the model as a control expressed in logarithmic form to reduce its skewness.

*Mexico City policy* – A variable capturing the implementation of the Mexico City policy is included as a control in the form of a dummy variable in line with the research by Asiedu et. al who found this variable to have a significant effect on the allocation of U.S. foreign aid related to family planning.<sup>159</sup>

In the originally compiled dataset included also a variable of fertility rate operationalized as estimated total births per woman, as the reduction of this rate was historically the primary goal of the family planning programs and is theorized to be still present in contemporary policies. However, this variable was excluded from the analysis due to the high level of correlation with the variable of maternal mortality to avoid potential problems associated with multicollinearity of independent variables.

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<sup>158</sup> Berthélemy, Jean-Claude. ‘Bilateral Donors’ Interest vs. Recipients’ Development Motives in Aid Allocation: Do All Donors Behave the Same?’ *Review of Development Economics* 10, no. 2 (2006): 179–94.

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The summary statistics of variables included in the analysis is provided below along with the table of correlations of independent variables with the family planning aid.

*Table 2. Summary statistics of variables*

Variable	Description	mean	standard deviation
<b>fp_aid</b>	ODA - Bilateral aid commitments dedicated to family planning	2367692	5926972
<b>total_aid</b>	Net ODA - bilateral aid commitments	149146926	285226439
<b>income</b>	Adjusted GDP per capita	4779.39	4617.027
<b>trade</b>	Trade export as a % of GDP of the donor	0.0002401	0.0011836
<b>water_stress</b>	Freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources	32.07	78.38631
<b>m_mortality</b>	Maternal mortality ratio	213.10	252.6111
<b>stability</b>	Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	-0.37	0.9495232
<b>population</b>	Population	42383629	161429932

*Table 3. Correlations of independent variables with the family planning aid*

	fp_aid	population	income	water_stress	trade	m_mortality	stability	mcp
fp_aid	1							
population	0.1750334	1						
income	-0.2900985	-0.0280455	1					
water_stress	-0.0153709	0.0456558	0.1260604	1				
trade	-0.0383397	0.4241595	0.1439133	-0.0001878	1			
m_mortality	0.2892416	-0.0442752	-0.5127197	-0.1690101	-0.1184378	1		
stability	-0.3121648	-0.1454877	0.4352084	-0.2668316	-0.0467829	-0.4122018	1	
mcp	-0.0414311	0.0091103	0.031018	0.0091251	-0.0141211	-0.055186	-0.0003512	1

In Table 3 'we can observe that the strongest relation with political stability suggests that the less politically stable countries receive more family planning aid. A strong correlation can be also observed between family planning aid and the recipient's income and maternal mortality meaning that we can expect to poorer countries to receive more family planning aid, which is also expected in the case of countries with higher maternal mortality.

#### 4.4. Analytical model

Following the description of the selected method of estimation and the selection of data included in the analysis, below is presented the analytical model that is used to perform the fixed effect estimation analysis.

$$\begin{aligned} fp\_aid_{it} = & \alpha_i + \beta_i \log(population)_{it} \\ & + \beta_i \log(income)_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i water\_stress_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i trade_{i(t-1)} \\ & + \beta_i m\_mortality_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i stability_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i mcp_{i(t-1)} + D\gamma + u_{it} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} total\_aid_{it} = & \alpha_i + \beta_i \log(population)_{it} \\ & + \beta_i \log(income)_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i water\_stress_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i trade_{i(t-1)} \\ & + \beta_i m\_mortality_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i stability_{i(t-1)} + \beta_i mcp_{i(t-1)} + D\gamma + u_{it} \end{aligned}$$

In the model below  $D$  is a dummy variable for fixed effects and  $\gamma$  represents the vector of coefficients for the fixed effects. In this model, the following independent variables have lagged by one unit of time to account for the potential of reverse causality and to reflect the decision-making process of the donor country as recommended by Clemens et al. to improve the precision of the model.<sup>160</sup> For the OLS analysis the fixed effects coefficient is removed from the model.

## 5. Results

The table 4 presents the results of the OLS estimation and fixed effect estimation with the family planning aid as a dependent variable. The results suggest that including a fixed effect for the country significantly improves the explanatory power of the model as seen in the adjusted R-squared. Comparing the results of the OLS and fixed effect model the first model explains a significantly larger portion of the variance. Interpreting the results of the fixed effects estimation we can observe that trade is positively associated with the dependent variable constituted by the family planning aid, with a coefficient significant at the 5% level. This result provides support to the second hypothesis arguing that the economic interests of

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<sup>160</sup> Clemens, Michael A., Steven Radelet, and Rikhil R. Bhavnani. 'Counting Chickens When They Hatch: The Short-Term Effect of Aid on Growth'. SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY, 12 July 2004.

the donor country play a positive role in the amount of the resources dedicated to the family planning that are allocated to the recipient country. Highly statistically significant is also the coefficient for the variable of maternal mortality, although it counterintuitively shows a negative relation, suggesting that a country with a higher maternal mortality ratio will be allocated fewer resources dedicated to family planning. These results disprove the fourth hypothesis which expected that the level of maternal mortality in the recipient country has a significant positive effect on the amount of family planning aid received from the United States.. While holding everything else constant the results suggest that for one unit increase in maternal mortality, the amount of aid will decrease by 2,39%. Highly statistically significant are also the variable for income and dummy variable for Mexico City Policy in accordance with the expectation based on existing theory.

Table 4 – Estimation for the dependent variable family planning aid

Family planning aid	Fixed effects results	OLS results
trade (t-1)	2.57E+03 (0.025239)*	-5.135e+02 (0.0018) **
stability (t-1)	2.91E-01 (0.612773)	0.8043 (0.0569)
water stress (t-1)	9.84E-02 (0.041960)*	-4.026e-04 (0.9559)
maternal mortality (t-1)	-2.39E-02 (8.00e-06)***	3.369e-03 (-0.05485)
log GDP per capita (t-1)	-7.15E+00 (5.70e-05)***	-3.416e+00 (< 2e-16) ***
log population	5.23E-01 (-0.894002)	1.666e+00 (3.73e-13) ***
Mexico City Policy	-1.59E+00 (0.000735)***	-1.016e+00 (0.0444) *
Adjusted R-squared	0.7803	0.2938

Same as with the previous estimation the fixed effects estimation provided results that can explain a larger portion of the variance. Interpreting the results of the first estimation we can

observe that a different set of variables is statistically significant. Highly significant is the recipient's country income in line with the expectation that poorer countries would receive more foreign aid. With a coefficient significant at 10% we can also observe a negative relation of foreign aid and stability, suggesting that less politically stable countries are recipients of the larger amount of development aid from the United States. Lastly, we can see the positive association with the recipient country population with a coefficient significant at the 5% level.

*Table 5 – Estimation for the dependent variable net ODA aid*

Net total ODA	Fixed effects results	OLS results
trade (t-1)	9.641e+00 (0.944223)	-2.324e+01 (0.43456)
stability (t-1)	-1.925e-01 (0.005470)**	-4.998e-01 (1.32e-10)***
water stress (t-1)	9.525e-03 (0.101161)	-1.378e-03 (0.29765)
maternal mortality (t-1)	-5.939e-04 -0.351893	7.504e-04 (0.00399)**
log GDP per capita (t-1)	-7.026e-01 (0.000975)***	-2.044e-01 (0.00262)**
log population	1.186e+00 (0.012238)*	3.619e-01 ( $< 2e-16$ )***
Mexico City Policy	2.140e-02 -0.704839	1.108e-01 (0.22634)
Adjusted R-squared	0.8984	0.338

Comparing the results of the estimation with family planning aid and total ODA aid as a dependent variable, we can see that both are determined by somewhat different sets of variables. The difference between the two sets suggests that the determinants of the family planning aid are sector-specific at least to a certain degree. In accordance with the previous prediction, we can observe a highly significant relation with the variable for maternal mortality with a coefficient at a high level of significance. Although contrary to the expectation the relations between maternal mortality and family planning aid appear to be negative, The highly significant coefficient of the Mexico City variable confirms the findings

of the previous research and suggests the influence of domestic factors on the allocation to the sector of family planning. In regard to the variable representing income also with a coefficient at a high level of significance, we can observe that values of the coefficients in the case of the total foreign aid convey similar relations at a similar level of significance. From our observation, we can see that in the case of the United States, the recipient's income can be interpreted as a determinant of the foreign aid allocation both in the case of the overall aid and the sectoral aid dedicated to family planning. Regarding this relation interpretation of the income as a sector-specific determinant of foreign aid focused on the sector of family planning cannot be meaningful.

Among the variables that can provide certain information relevant to the evaluation of the hypotheses formulated in the previous part of the thesis question about the role of the analyzed factors specifically in the allocation of foreign aid focused on family planning is the coefficient capturing the relationship with the trade. While with the ODA as the dependent variable the statistical results The variable that captures the stress on the water resources in the recipient country with the coefficient significant at a 5% level can be interpreted as indicative of a positive relation between the strain on the local natural resources and the foreign aid directed towards family planning. This appears to confirm the hypothesis about environmental degradation as a factor in the family planning aid allocation. Positive relation was also found in regard to the trade that was not observed in the case of the aggregate foreign aid, with the coefficient significant at 5% level. This finding might suggest the support for the hypothesis regarding the pursuit of economic goals through family planning programs, although further research is needed to better explain this relation.

## **6. Discussion**

The following section discusses the limitations of the thesis's findings, its potential contribution, and the areas for further research.

The main limitation of the thesis is the limited external validity of the thesis, as the findings are specific to the analyzed case with very limited potential for generalization into different contexts. As the research on the determinants of foreign aid allocation shows, there are significant differences in their motivations and importance of individual factors, therefore the results of the analysis are relevant solely for the case of the United States and further research is required to explain what determines the provision of funding for family planning programs by other donors.

Another important limitation of the thesis is a relatively small dataset that contained data only across 11 years and 145 developing countries totaling 1753 observations. If a larger set of data were available, it could open a possibility to explore a range of different research questions and provide a better understanding of the functioning of the logic of populations and its role in determining the policies. The collection of data from the early periods would allow for the observation of the development of the policies over a longer time period and analyze the influence of the changing international norms and development agenda established by international organizations such as the United Nations with the Cairo Conference on Population and Development or the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals on the foreign policy in regard to family planning.

We also have to acknowledge the limitations of the included variables in the study as they do not perfectly capture the objectives related to family planning which are presented in the theoretical part of the thesis. This is especially relevant in regard to the variable that was chosen as a proxy for environmental degradation. Even though water scarcity captures only part of the phenomena of environmental degradation, the lack of available large-scale comparable data for other suitable variables that would capture the desired relationship such as deforestation or soil erosion, resulted in the selection of this variable, even though the limitation stemming from this choice have to be acknowledged.

The important limitation of the thesis is the ability of the single variables to capture the

supposed motivation of the donor as the relationship between the theories is complex and the motivation appears to be overlapping as demonstrated in the theoretical part of the thesis. Overall results of the analysis are only partial and cannot capture the whole relationship between the strategic, economic, and ecological objectives in the international family planning programs.

Another possible limitation might be stemming from the selected method for the analysis of the dataset. With other methods used in the research related to the determinants of foreign aid allocation, in future research, the result of the thesis might be evaluated against the results of the OLS and fixed method. Including a larger variety of different methods to analyze the selected data as done by other authors performing research into foreign aid would improve the precision of the estimation and provide a stronger argument for the accuracy of the findings.

### **Contribution and areas for further research**

The thesis found a connection between environmental degradation operationalized as water stress and the financing of family planning programs although the coefficient is significant only at a 5% level. This result can be interpreted as an attempt of the United States to pursue environmental goals through family planning programs but at the same time, further research is needed to confirm this relation and test it using different variables that might be suitable as a proxy for environmental degradation. While water availability is only one of the environmental concerns connected with population growth, for other phenomena such as soil erosion, or deforestation do not have systematic data that would allow for this type of analysis. Similar concerns can be expressed for the coefficient capturing the relationship between the trade and the family planning programs is also significant only at a 5% level. To better understand the population control logic in family planning programs supplementing the quantitative analysis with qualitative research would be desirable to address questions omitted from this analysis such as the practice of the family planning programs.

## Conclusion

Family planning has a complicated history in the international development agenda. First established as an instrument of population control, some authors argue that the focus on population control did not disappear from the family planning programs despite the discursive change brought by the Cairo Program of Action that revolutionized the agenda. Even though the language of women's rights in the context of family planning in development became prevalent, some authors are critical of the underlying aims of the policies, the returning focus on population control, and the instrumentalization of women's bodies for other goals.<sup>161</sup> Regarding the critical stream of literature that questions the location of population control in the past and is still present in contemporary family planning programs, the thesis examined the family planning policy of the United States over the period of 2010-2020. The focus of the thesis was to find what factors are determining the allocation of the family planning aid and to what extent is the policy influenced by the concerns connected to the population growth.

The thesis analyzed the policy of the United States as the largest donor in international development and family planning specifically and examined to what degree the patterns of family planning aid allocation correspond to the proclaimed rhetoric of women's health and empowerment. The analysis builds on the stream of literature that explores the various interests driving the policies regarding family planning in the development policy and evaluates their effect on the policy of the United States- The main aim of the thesis is to examine the considerations behind the foreign aid dedicated to family planning in light of the prevalent discourse of women's health and empowerment and assess to what extent are contemporary family planning programs used to reach other goals or if they, in fact, embody the feminist values presented in the accompanying discourse. The thesis problematizes the demographic rationale as the guiding principle behind the family planning programs and identifies the main concerns connected to population growth as environmental degradation, economic goals, and security concerns. The focus of the thesis was to find what factors are determining the allocation of family planning aid and to what extent is the policy influenced

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<sup>161</sup> Nandagiri, Rishita. 'What's so Troubling about "Voluntary" Family Planning Anyway? A Feminist Perspective', Foster, Emma A. 'International Sustainable Development Policy: (Re)Producing Sexual Norms through Eco-Discipline'. *Gender, Place & Culture* 21, no. 8 (September 2014): 1029-44., Horn, Denise M. 'Locating Security in the Womb'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 15, no. 2 (June 2013): 195-212.



by the concerns connected to the population growth.

Using the panel data of 66 developing countries through the OLS and fixed effect methods of estimation, the thesis examines to what extent is the aid allocation in the selected case determined by the recipient's income, bilateral trade with the donor country, recipient's political stability, maternal mortality, and stress on the water resources, used as a proxy for environmental degradation. The results of the regression estimation were then compared with the second model which replaces the dependent variable with the aggregate aid flow. As the strategic considerations are found to be associated with an increase in the amount of bilateral aid in the existing literature, by this comparison, the thesis aimed to find whether we can observe determinants included in the model to be specific for the family planning programs. The thesis finds the influence of environmental degradation and trade with the United States on the allocation of family planning aid supporting the hypotheses arguing for the positive effect of environmental degradation and trade relations with the recipient country. On the other hand, the third hypothesis arguing for the positive effect of the political instability in the recipient country on the allocation of foreign aid dedicated to family planning was rejected. Rejected was also the fourth hypothesis concerned with the proclaimed rhetoric of concern for women's health as a primary determinant of aid allocation postulating the positive effect of maternal mortality on the amount of family planning aid provided by the United States. The findings of the thesis indicate the prevalence of strategic considerations in the allocation of foreign aid by the United States and the instrumentalization of women's bodies for strategic goals, although more research is needed to better understand those relations as well as the interconnections between them.

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