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Nations Population

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), in PNG, The Solomon Islands, and Timor Leste are among the highest in the world. The Total Fertility Rates (TFR) in the Pacific is also high. In 2000 the TFR exceeded 4 in at least 12 Pacific countries. **In Timor Leste the TFR is 7.7, making it the highest in the world (DHS 2003).**

Young people are a significant proportion of the Pacific population. Currently 65% of the Solomon Islands population is under 25. Employment prospects are extremely poor and there are currently not enough places in the education system to accommodate all young people. Teen pregnancy is also common among Pacific Island Countries.

The threat of a HIV epidemic in the Pacific is looming. Although comparatively low, the political, social and demographic features of countries such as the Solomon Islands and PNG make a rapid increase in infection a very real possibility. Indicators are that STI's such as the Human Papilloma Virus are already increasing in the youth population. This indicates the need for stronger Sexual and Reproductive Health interventions if the spread of AIDS is to be halted.

8.3 million People live in the Pacific. Populations vary from over 5 million in the Papua New Guinea to an estimated 2000 in Nuie. Since the ICPD the Pacific has continued to experience rapid rates of population growth. The current pace of growth will see Melanesian populations double in 29.5 years Micronesian in 32 and Polynesian in 31.

All Pacific Island Countries that attended ICPD voted to endorse the Program Of Action (PoA), yet the implementation of the POA among Pacific Island Countries has been ad hoc. Whilst some have included aspects of a population policy within their health policies, minimal funding, competing demands and cultural sensitivities have hampered the delivery of services, and therefore the overall achievement of ICPD goals in the Pacific.

Country	IMR	MMR	TFR	Primary Enrolment	Secondary Enrolment	Births per 1000 women aged 18-10	HIV Prevalence
Fiji	18	75	2.88	109/109	78/83	54	0.2/<0.1
Micronesia	21	70				53	
Samoa	26	130	4.12	104/101	71/79	44	
Solomon Islands	21	130	4.42			52	2.2/1.1
Timor Leste	124	660	7.7			27	
Vanuatu	29	130	4.13	112/111	28/29	52	
PNG	62	300	4.6	77/78	25/20	67	0.8/0.4

Information sourced from:

UNFPA State of the World Population Report 2004

FCI, PAI and IPPF Countdown 2015; a Report Card on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

World Bank, Timor Leste DHS