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# **SME WORLD** **Asia**

*The Next Level* e-Edition

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**Rethinking Population Dynamics for SDG Realization**



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# Rethinking Population Dynamics for SDG Realization by 2030

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**10 years left to go, the international community must break its silence and tackle population growth if the Sustainable Development Goals are ever to be realised. There are many reasons for that, each Goal has its own drivers and obstacles, and a network of interrelationships between them (some positive, many negative) mean there are few simple answers and no magic bullets. The argument is not that tackling population growth will solve our problems but it is that failure to address unsustainable population which will prevent us from achieving many of those Goals, and that addressing population through ethical, empowering means will accelerate the progress of change.**

The United Nations currently predicts that by 2027, India will overtake China as the world's most populous country. Estimates suggest India and Nigeria will together add 470 million people in the next three decades — almost a quarter of

the world's population increase to 2050. According to a new study from the University of Washington, however, several developing nations may find their so-called demographic dividend much less of a boon than anticipated. Rapid population growth, developmental activities either to meet the growing population or the growing needs of the population as well as changing lifestyles and consumption patterns pose major challenge to preservation and promotion of ecological balance in India.

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experiencing rapid population ageing and even population decline in some cases. Furthermore, the world is witnessing increasingly complex international migration patterns and many countries continue to experience very high rates of urbanization.

## **Planet resources and Population**

Population growth, population ageing and decline, as well as migration and urbanization, affect virtually all development objectives that are on top of national and global development agendas. They affect consumption, production, employment, income distribution, poverty and social protections, including pensions; they also complicate our efforts to ensure universal access to health, education, housing, sanitation, water, food and energy. It increases pressures on the planet's resources viz. water, forests, land and the earth's atmosphere -- contributing to climate change and challenging environmental sustainability. However, population dynamics do not only affect critical development

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objectives; they are themselves affected by social, economic and environmental changes.

A growing body of evidence explicitly addresses the impact that continued population growth has on environmental crises, socio-economic development and people's lives. World Scientists have warned that continued rapid population growth is a primary driver behind many ecological and even societal threats. Surprisingly the issue of population is not simply one of population growth occurring where fertility rates are currently high. We are already exceeding the capacity of the Earth to supply our needs and maintain planetary health: the primary driver of that crisis is overconsumption in rich parts of the world where fertility rates are currently relatively low. We are currently adding more than 80 million people a year to our global population. The UN projects that without

further action to address population growth; there will be two billion more people by 2050, and three-and-a-half billion more by 2100. It estimates just a one-in-four chance of our numbers reaching a peak before the end of this century

Talking about tackling population growth is not about controlling the poorest or infringing on women's rights. In fact, it is the opposite. It is about empowering women and communities, educating them and making sure their rights to know how, when and if to have a family are central to economic policies. Population needs to be reinstated on the global agenda, to come out of the shadows and an exclusively individual 'rights led' framework. While it must never be inconsistent with human rights, the value of ethical, empowering population action extends beyond individual benefits. It also derives an economic value. Today, there is still inadequate resourcing of these measures which is a social injustice, and a failure of the global community to recognise the human and socio-economic development value family planning represents to sustainable development.



Investing in ethical, choice-based approaches to reducing population growth and achieving a sustainable population is a much needed yet ignored factor in today's international policy dialogue. Too often population growth is couched or buried in general terms such as "family planning" and "empowerment" which obscure its importance and prevent the clarity of thinking and policymaking we need. If we want to see the absolute numbers of people, communities and habitats facing a survival crisis come down, population solutions must be more than about health indicators or individual rights, essential as those are.

## **Controlling the monster**

Population dynamics are the result of individual choices and opportunities. To address and harness the

opportunities of population dynamics for sustainable development, countries should seek to enlarge, not restrict, individual rights. Countries should work to expand people's choices, resourcefulness, creativity and resilience, by adopting policies that are human rights-based and gender-responsive.

Human rights-based and gender-responsive policies, such as promoting universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including voluntary family planning, and to education, including comprehensive sexuality education, can make a world of difference for people and societies. Together, these measures help to avoid unwanted pregnancies, reduce teenage pregnancies, curb infant and maternal mortality, and reduce gender-based violence and unsafe abortions.

Rights-based and gender-responsive policies are critical in a context of low fertility and rapid population ageing or population decline. Policies addressing low fertility should promote a better work life balance and ensure access to essential services, such as child care and social protections. Furthermore, non-discriminatory policies are important to allow older persons to contribute fully to society while at the same time receiving the care, services and social protections they need. Fiscal policies, social protections and non financial support systems for families can influence decisions about family size.

Create equitable, liveable and sustainable cities that can accommodate increased demands for livelihoods and services, while strengthening the linkages between rural and urban areas, and promoting the sustainable development of rural communities. By 2050 the global proportion of people living in cities and towns is expected to rise to about 67 per cent. The rapidly increasing dominance of cities places the process of urbanization among the most significant global social transformations of the twenty-first century.

Strengthen national capacities to collect, use and analyze population data and projections. People-centred development strategies must systematically consider changes in the number, age and location of people; and use population data and projections to inform development goals, targets and indicators, as well as policies and programmes. Data producers should systematically disaggregate relevant socio-economic data by sex, age and location. Demographic transition does not occur in isolation. Simultaneously, there are ongoing economic transition, education transition, health transition and reproductive health transition. All these affect human development. If there is synergy between these transitions; the transitions can be

completed rapidly; there will be substantial improvement in human development and economic development. The focus of planners, programme implementers and the people during the next two decades will have to be in achieving the synergy so that the world can achieve rapid population stabilization, improvement in economic social and human development. Achieving sustainable global population matters, if we do, we can all have the dignity, security and wellbeing envisioned by the Sustainable Development Goals. We must not fail.

## Hesa launches Ubuntu Marketplace app for women entrepreneurs

**H**esa in collaboration with Ubuntu Consortium has developed a marketplace application for the women led MSMEs. The launch was held in the presence of the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Basavaraj S. Bommai.

The app will allow women entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products, said the press release.

To assist micro and medium businesses owned by women the app will also provide technology & market linkage capability. With this collaboration, Hesa will be supporting the existing 22,000 and more women entrepreneurs to create value in the ecosystem.

Speaking on the development, Vamsi Udayagiri, Founder & CEO of Hesa said, "Hesa's endeavour has always been to uplift entrepreneurs and with this launch we are more committed to empower women entrepreneurs of micro to medium -sized enterprises, who want to have a wider reach for their products and services. We are looking to give a wider reach to women entrepreneurs of Ubuntu through our tech platform which will increase their revenues by multi-fold."

Hesa is a unified social, digital and physical (phygital) commerce platform enabling digital transactions of products and services in rural India. (KNN Bureau)