

DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS AND SUSTAINABILITY

(Sect. I, chap. 4)

42. This chapter presents three programme areas:

(a) Developing and disseminating knowledge concerning the links between demographic trends and factors and sustainable development;

(b) Formulating integrated national policies for population, environment and development;

(c) Implementing integrated population, environment and development programmes at the local level.

PROGRAMME AREAS

- A. Developing and disseminating knowledge concerning the links between demographic trends and factors and sustainable development

Basis for action

43. Demographic trends and factors and sustainable development have a synergistic relationship.

44. The growth of world population and production combined with unsustainable consumption patterns places increasingly severe stress on the life-supporting capacities of our planet. These interactive processes affect the use of land, water, air, energy and other resources. Unless well-managed, rapidly growing cities face major environmental problems. The increase in both the number and size of cities calls for greater attention to issues of local government and municipal management. Human dimensions are key elements to consider in this intricate set of relationships and they should be adequately taken into consideration in comprehensive policies for sustainable development. Such policies should address the linkages of demographic trends and factors, resource use, [appropriate technology dissemination,] and development. Population policy should also recognize the role played by human beings in environmental and development concerns. There is need to increase awareness of this issue among decision makers at all levels and to provide better information on which to base national and international policies and framework against which to interpret this information.

45. There is a need to develop strategies to mitigate both the adverse impact on the environment of human activities as well as the adverse impact of environmental change on human populations. The world's population is expected to reach over 8 billion by the year 2020. Sixty percent of the world's population already live in coastal areas, while 65 per cent of cities with populations above 2.5 million are located along the world coasts and several of them are already at or below the present sea level.

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