



Asian Profile

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Population Planning Strategies and Programmes in Sri Lanka

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Introduction

In the past few decades, considerable experience has been gained around the world on how government policies and programmes can be designed and implemented to address population concerns, enhance the choices of people and contribute to broad social progress. Experience has also shown that countries where the leadership is strongly committed to human resource development, gender equality and meeting the reproductive health needs of the population, including family planning, have been able to mobilize sustained commitment at all levels to make population programmes successful.

There is also the growing recognition that population policies and programmes need to involve the beneficiaries in design and implementation if they are to be successful and sustainable. While economic growth can be considered a very effective means of population control, the poorest of countries of the world where population pressure is high can hardly wait for economic progress to reduce population growth rates. On the contrary rapid increase in population frustrates all economic efforts as such population planning is among the highest national priorities (Mahadevan and Sumangala, 1989; Miro and Potter, 1980).

Population Planning Strategies

Population Growth and Family Planning

Population policy involves a statement of goals and a set of actions to be taken by government to influence or respond to a population variable or change. Such policies could be categorized as population responsive policies (direct) or population influencing policies (indirect). Sri Lanka was among the first countries in Asia to recognize the relationship between population and dynamics and socio-economic development, and the need for policies and programmes aimed at moderating population growth rates as well as achieving an equitable internal distribution of the population.

Continuing growth of population and pressures on land have brought increasing concern to