

Editorial

Efforts to Control World Population in COVID 19 Pandemic

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A B S T R A C T

World population reached 7.8 billion on 11th July 2020 which is considered to be higher than the capacity of the planet Earth to be able to sustain in future if it continues to increase further at the same pace. Present estimates specify approximately 83 million people added to the world's population every year. If we take declining fertility levels, the global population is expected to reach 8.6 billion in 2030, 9.8 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion in 2100. According to the Inter Academy Panel Statement on Population Growth, circa 1994, most of the problems related to climatic change, such as rising levels of carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, global warming, and pollution, are intensified by the rise in population number. Overpopulation is also responsible to depletion of natural resources leading to scarcity of fresh water, fossil fuel, etc.

According to estimates of UNFPA, there would be 47 million women in low- and middle-income countries that would not be able to access modern contraceptives and 7 million unintended pregnancies are anticipated if the lockdown goes on for 6 months and there are crucial interruptions to health services owing to Covid-19 pandemic. During the same period there would be 31 million additional cases of gender-based violence and 2 million female genital mutilation cases that could have been averted in next decade. There would be an additional 13 million child marriages taking place between 2020 and 2030 due to COVID-19 pandemic disrupted efforts to end child marriage.²

Opposite and positive view is human resilience and salutogenesis. Throughout the centuries, what we observed that the world did not become a worse place, but a better place to live in. Our progress in many fields is extraordinary since the growth of the population during last centuries. Within one century, if we imagine that we would not live in 2019, but in 1919. In the era of our grandparents or great-grandparents, when world population was less than 2 billion. You must have heard your grand parents telling the number of children in their families and number of siblings died due to poverty or infection. In 1919, about 80 percent of the world's population lived in extreme poverty whereas it is about 10-15 percent in 2020. Life expectancy was just 40 years in 1919 which is 70 years now. Cholera, smallpox, Spanish flu and many other diseases killed many hundred million and eradicated one third of the total population on the face of Earth. Today, smallpox is completely

eradicated and many other diseases are rare occurrence.

Climate change was not discussed in the last century though it is a major concern. Floods, droughts, storms, and heat waves used to kill more people than today which could be because of our efforts to protect ourselves better against the dangers of the weather. We've built resilient housing, agriculture, dikes, and early warning systems. Because the number of victims fell sharply and the population grew strongly, chances of dying from a climate-related event, fell by around 98 percent.

Population is the number of organisms of the same species living in a particular geographical area with the capability to interbreed. It has been observed that when a particular species exceeds the number of its capacity to interbreed then its number starts decreasing. Interbreeding requires resources for its sustainability. As population of human beings is increasing and resources required for its survival are decreasing on Earth, it is a matter of great concern. This concern was realized when world population touches the mark of 5 billion on 11th July 1987. The day as World Population Day came about in 1989 when it was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme. The United Nations General Assembly decided to continue to observe this day from 1990.

The United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) began to work in 1969 under the aegis of the United Nations Development Fund. Its name was changed to United Nations Population Fund in 1987. However, its abbreviation UNFPA is still in use. UNFPA works with many partners, both within and outside the United Nations system including governments, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and its leaders, civil society, to achieve its mission of population control.

UNFPA works to support family planning, maternal and child health, human rights and gender equality by ensuring a continuous, reliable supply of good quality contraceptives; strengthening national health systems; advocating the designing and implementation of policies; and gathering data to support the work in the population control. UNFPA also provides global leadership in increasing access and availability to family planning, by partners—including governments—to develop evidence and policies, and by offering programmatic, technical and financial assistance to developing countries.

The World Population day which is celebrated world over on 11th July every year is important as it calls attention to the issues of overpopulation, increases awareness about the impact of overpopulation on the environment and development. It also highlights the health issues faced by child bearing women and the significance of family

planning, gender equality, poverty, maternal health and human rights. It highlights the following standards to uphold the human rights to family planning: non-discrimination in providing family planning information and services; availability and accessibility of all commodities and services which is acceptable and of good quality keeping privacy and confidentiality of the informed participants who are responsible and accountable at the same time understanding the limitation of health system.

The theme this year of world population day is based on safeguarding the health and rights of women and girls around the world especially during the time of COVID-19 pandemic.

References

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