

# Population and Development



National Population Committee  
Technical Office

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## LUMINOUS WORDS

((We have always emphasized the importance of learning and knowledge and we have always been open to the adoption of new developments in this field.

Information technology and communications have now become the main elements that move forward the development process in this third millennium. Therefore, we have accorded our attention to finding a national strategy to develop the skills and abilities of citizens in this domain with the aim of further developing e-government services. We are closely following the important steps that we have made in this regard. We call upon all government institutions to speedily enhance their performance, and to facilitate their services, by applying digital technology in order to usher the Sultanate into the constantly evolving spheres for applying knowledge. ))

**Qaboos Bin Said**

The annual meeting of Council of Oman  
13 Dhu Al-Qu'dah 1429 – 11 November 2008

## EDITORIAL

## In this Issue

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The countries of the world have committed to the Millennium Declaration issued in 2000 which set the year 2015 as the end of period prescribed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which constitutes eight development issues: eradication of poverty, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing global partnership for development.

The MDGs and many of their targets were priorities included in the Five-Year Development Plans of the Sultanate particularly those approved in the ninetieth of the last century (i.e. before internationally approved). Emphasis was placed on these goals and numerous national projects and programs that translate these targets were approved in the Sixth and Seventh Five-Year Development Plans, the implementation of which escorted the first decade of this century. Focusing on population issues, sustainable human development, provision of social welfare for groups in need, activation of woman participation and attention to environment were of the main objectives of the Seventh Five-Year Development Plan (2006-2010).

Evaluating the development objectives accomplished, it is clear that the Sultanate has made great strides towards achieving these goals and objectives and able to attain significant achievements in many of them and in some exceeded the targeted indicators.

As for the Sultanate commitment to accomplish these objectives in the time specified, the Eighth Five-Year Development Plan (2011-2015) will award more attention to the unfulfilled targets while maintaining the achieved ones. This to be within the framework of the second long term strategy (1996-2020) that targeted setting the appropriate conditions for achieving the economic diversification, optimal exploitation of available natural resources and the geographic location of the Sultanate, furthering the citizen's living standard, ensuring benefit of every citizen from the outcomes of the development process, development of human resources, upgrading the capabilities and skills of citizens to cope with technical development and managing its new developments with high efficiency and encouraging establishment of a private sector characterized by effectiveness and competitiveness.

**Ahmed bin Abdul Nabi Macki**

Minister of National Economy  
Chairman of the National Population Committee

## Prevention Better than Treatment

Reports and statistics of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN indicate that the world is heading toward aging. It is expected that the number of old population in 2040 exceeds the number of children for the first time in human history. This is due to decline in fertility rates worldwide, the decline in mortality rates and the rise in life expectancy at birth.

The change in age structures is associated with change in morbidity patterns from communicable diseases to chronic diseases such as heart and cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes and other. According to WHO, communicable diseases are responsible for 60% of mortality worldwide and about 72% in medium-income countries. It is expected that the burden of these diseases will increase on countries with the increase urbanization and number of old population.

This will exert more burdens on countries in order to develop and enhance their health care systems to meet the changeable growing needs of health in their societies such as treatment, care and prevention services, health promotion and long-term management for chronic disorders. This in addition to the high cost of treatment of chronic diseases which exceeds the cost of treating childhood diseases, parasite and various communicable diseases.

According to the specialists following-up the morbidity status in the world, the developed countries witnessed the emergence of chronic diseases for nearly a century and their growth rates were slow, while in the developing countries their emergence have begun not more than three decades but the growth rates of related morbidity were quick. This resulted from the prevalence of certain behaviors such as decreased physical activities, overweight and obesity, use of tobacco and liquors, increase popularity of unhealthy diets systems manifested in low nutritional value and high calories diets and use of hydrogenated vegetable oils, sugary foods and carbonated drinks.

The most cost-effective strategies to reduce the growing burden of chronic diseases is to reduce the spread of risk factors associated with these diseases through the adoption of community-based health behaviors, as prevention is better than treatment.

Sawsan Al-Lawatia  
Supervisor of the Technical Office of the  
National Population Committee

## International Youth Day

IAs per recommendation presented by the World Conference of Ministers

Responsible for Youth (Lisbon 8-12 August 1998), the General Assembly

of UN endorsed the recommendation in December 1999 declaring that

12 - August to be an International Youth Day.

According to the UN, youth are population at age group (15-24), but the League of Arab States extended it to the (15-29) group so that Arab countries can focus on work and family issues. Due to this definition, youth constitutes about (34%) of total population of the Sultanate in 2008. The government awarded great attention to youth by including their group in its priorities since the first years of the blessed Renaissance. This is for the believe that youth are source of power to economic and social development relayed on for achieving the sustainable development of the country. During the first long-term strategy (1976-1995) two Years were allocated for Youth. 1981 was announced as for Omani youth and 1993 as Year of Youth. The government interest in youth was manifested in the second long-term strategy (1996-2020) through the allocation of special dimension to the development of Omani human resources to be able to keep pace with technical and technological development and manage changes with high efficiency. It is worth mentioning that this marked attention to youth in the national plans was years before the international accreditation for the 2000- World Program of Action for Youth.

Kawther Alfarsi  
Statistician – Technical Office of the  
National Population Committee

## Today's Issue

### Relationship between Population Growth and Economic Growth

The population growth reflects the economic development in many ways and depends on the nature of the growth rate. The rapid increase in population may stimulates demand for services and goods if income growth rate exceeds that of population keeping per capita expenditure almost stable. When income rates are lower than population growth, the per capita share in income will decrease. The relationship can be also followed as in the case that workforce is increasing; if the economy is expanding then the workforce will not assist only in maintaining the growth rate but may also give a strong push for attracting foreign investment. From other side, if the economic growth is not in line with the expansion in the workforce, this will lead to high unemployment rates, partially unemployment, decline in levels of per capita share in income and lower savings and investment if a large rate of outputs are directed to support a large sector of population or the government policy permits a liberal import policies. Thus, the relationship between population growth and economic growth is complicated and diversified.

Much has been written about these issues and a number of economic books contain extended treatments for the links between population growth and economic development. Several studies\* concluded that low rate of population growth has played a significant role in economic development in many Asian countries such as South Korea - Taiwan - Thailand – Singapore Indonesia – Malaysia, under directing the fiscal surplus to sustainable development and absorption of entrants of productive workforce to labor market (exploit the demographic opportunity).

In spite that all these countries are characterized by export-oriented economic policies so as to achieve optimal development, the population growth impacts played a pivotal role as follows:

1-Decline in fertility rate led to slow growth in number of children at education age. This allowed educational services to maintain high level for educational expenses in order to increase enrollment rates among the least wealthy sectors of population till the risen of level of per capita share and improvement of educational services provided to children.

2-Increased savings due to reduced family size. With low dependency rates, households have been in a better position to save a higher proportion of their income. These savings started to substitute foreign capital as the main source for domestic investment.

3-The fertility decline has inevitably led to slower growth in the workforce resulting in increase in wages and capital investment per worker. It is worth mentioning that this occurred specifically in the "tiger" economies in South and East Asia.

Thus, impact of rapid population growth on economic growth depends on many factors. It is difficult for those who have studied this relationship to find clear links as factors that affect economic growth vary among countries as also population growth rates.

\*More information about these studies in decisions of the conference on population and the miracle of East Asia 7-10 April 1997



## The National Population Strategy of the Sultanate of Oman

In continuance of reviewing the referral studies of the national population strategy and by this issue we complete reviewing half the studies prepared by the Technical Office of the National Population Committee (NPC) with participation of various government units and institutions during 2000-2002. Our theme for the fourth study is:

### Education , Training and Qualification

The study addresses several issues in area of education development and the educational characteristics of the population in the Sultanate of Oman. The study focused on illiteracy (41% of the population in age 15 and above in 1993). It explained students' distribution between the general, technical and vocational education, and development of enrollment rates at the various educational stages by gender and administrative divisions. Further, the study analyzed the internal efficiency standards of general education (dropout and repetition) and education quality in terms of class density, students per teacher and the quality of schools and facilities. The study reviewed the forecasts of students in various education stages in the long term; their needs, pressures on the resources and quality of education resulting from rapid population growth. Also, analyzed the priorities and challenges of the education and training sector, the current policies and programs related to education, training and qualification including adult education programs (non-formal education) and in service training. The study arrived to a number of proposals and recommendations for quantitative and qualitative improvement of education, where it recommended establishment of a supreme national authority to oversee the directing of higher education, coordination between government and private universities and institutes, formulation of policies, plans and programs that aim to ensure quality of outputs, avoid losses and ability to assess outputs. Also, it recommended formation of councils or sectoral committees for vocational training for the various vocational sectors. The Study concluded by giving projections on the procedures and programs to achieve the proposed objectives.

#### The National Population Strategy of GCC Countries

We addressed, starting in the previous issue (the fifth), the dimensions that determines the population policies of the GCC States. These policies translate the basic principles to forms that contribute to directing the executive work path towards the general objectives. We had begun with the population dimension in some details, and in this issue we will discuss the second dimension which is the Population Structure constituting a set of policies briefly mentioned:

- 1-Recruiting expatriate workforce according to specific criteria in terms of age to ensure employment in jobs commensurate with age.
- 2-Taking into consideration the education level of expatriate workforce.
- 3-Encouraging citizens to work in private sector.
- 4-Rationalizing and controlling the domestic workers recruitment and engendering alternatives to eradicate the non-organized workforce phenomenon in GCC States.

#### Research Institutions in the Field of Population and Development

Discussion of the population problem in Egypt started since the thirties when the Mufti of Egypt in 1937 declared that Islam allows family planning. The real population policy began in 1962 by the declaration of the first official government endorsement for family planning whereas the Supreme Council of Family Planning was established in 1965, then the national program of family planning in 1966. In 1986 the document on "National Policy of Population" was formally approved and was renewed by the Ministry of Health and Population in 2000.

Recently, the National Population Council adopted the "Population Strategy Plan in Egypt" for the period (2007-2019) to activate the national efforts in facing population increase. The formal statistics indicate that the population estimates for mid-2008 totaled (75.1) million, total annual birth about (1.9) million births. From this, the Population Strategy Plan aimed at achieving total fertility rate at (2.4) child /woman by year 2012 and (2.1) by 2017.

The Population Strategy Plan comprises four basic dimensions: strengthening the interrelationship between population directions and the comprehensive development; activating the system of follow-up, evaluation and assessment of population conditions; increasing and continuance of media coverage for preventative health services; activating the role of leaders, decision makers, non-government sector and religious leaders to adopt the concept of small family and improve health of woman.

More information on the Population Strategy Plan of Egypt is on the website:  
<http://www.npc.gov.eg>

#### Arab Countries Experiences in Population Policies:

**Egypt (The National Population Council )**  
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## Population Terms

### 1. Population Size

All individuals living within the boundaries of the country in a certain date whether have the status of citizenship of the country, or they are just permanent or temporary residents. Number of population in the country is obtained using the following methods:

Conduction of census every five or ten years.

Demographic surveys during certain periods of time.

Population estimates during mid-year.

### 2. Area of Land Affected by Desertification

Annual monitoring of land areas exposed to desertification and deterioration of plant cover due to irresponsible misuse and change of ecosystems is as follows:

Area of land affected by desertification

Percentage of desertification =  $\frac{\text{Area of land affected by desertification}}{\text{Total country land area}} \times 100$

Source: Ministry of National Economy.(2006).Manual of methodologies of sustainable development indicators.

## Arab and International Days

International Day of Families	May 15
World Environment Day	June 5
World Population Day	June 11
World Day for Eradication of Illiteracy	August 8
World Youth Day	August 12

## Do You Know ?

- One out of six countries could face food shortage annually due to severe drought. <sup>1</sup>
- Population of China and India together amounts to 2.5 billion which is almost one third of the World's population.<sup>2</sup>
- A billion individual suffer from hunger and about 13 million child worldwide die annually prior to the fifth day of birth due to poor care or malnutrition or poor health status of child or mother as result of poverty or disease<sup>2</sup>.
- One of five persons worldwide suffers from illiteracy. <sup>3</sup>
- Up to 30% of plant and animal species may experience extinction if the increase in rates of global temperature exceeded 2.5<sup>0</sup> C<sup>1</sup>.
- There are 2 billion people in the world living below poverty line<sup>2</sup>.

1. UN Fund for Population.(2009).\_State of World Population 2009

2. <http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki>

3. [www.unesco.org/ar/literacy](http://www.unesco.org/ar/literacy)

## Population Indicators (Oman 2008) :

Total population of the Sultanate **2867428**<sup>1</sup>      Average number of students per in general education (government only) **27**<sup>1</sup>  
Number of Omanis injured in traffic accidents **8621**<sup>1</sup>      Percentage of low weight births to total live births **9.2**<sup>2</sup>  
The number of learners in literacy centers **10990**<sup>3</sup>

1. Ministry of National Economy.(2009).Statistical Year Book 2009

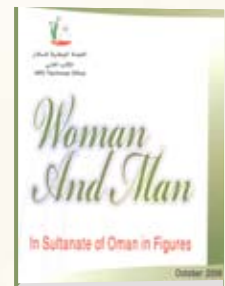
2. Ministry of Health.(2009).Health Facts 2008

3. Ministry of Education.(2009).Education Statistics Year Book 2008/2009

## Technical Office of the National Population Committee Publications

### Women and Men in Numbers

The book reviews some data categorized by gender and described in form of graphs. The book contains eight topics on the position of women and men in numbers in the Sultanate of Oman comprising (population - marital status - education - higher education - literacy program - health - work - political participation). At the end of the book there are some important definitions related to the topics listed.



## Invitation for Participation

For participation and comments in the periodical bulletin or for access of a copy please use the email

[npcoman@mone.gov.om](mailto:npcoman@mone.gov.om)  
or contact 00986 24695169