

The Effect of Population Programmes Upon Quality of Life and Sustainable Development

Nicholas Ford

This short paper reviews the main lines of thinking upon the following topics; global and regional trends in population growth; the links between rapid population growth and development; the key factors influencing fertility decline; the concepts of quality of life and sustainable development and the ways in which population programmes may be considered to have an impact upon them. It is emphasized that in the 1990s family planning programmes are advocated on the basis of maternal and child health, human rights and women's status rationales as much as for demographic-developmental reasons. How far specific family planning programmes meet the demands of such converging rationales very much depends upon the ways in which they are implemented within national settings. It is also argued that there has been much more progress made towards formulating population policies to enhance economic, rather than (ecologically-defined) sustainable, development.