



Population, development and climate change: links and effects on human health

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Introduction

Climate change, population growth, and development are interconnected challenges that affect human health. This report explores the links between these issues and their effects on human health. It discusses the impact of climate change on health, the role of population growth, and the importance of development in addressing these challenges. The report also highlights the need for increased collaboration in research policy and practice to tackle these complex challenges.

KEY MESSAGES

Increased collaboration in research policy and practice is needed to tackle the complex challenges they present.

• Future climate change in poor countries will have significant consequences for health and the environment.

• Family planning reduces unintended pregnancy, improves maternal and child health, and changes the social and economic status of women in turn generating economic benefit.

• Population growth, together with urbanization and industrialization in some countries, have bigger implications for health and reducing carbon emissions than the total number of people in the world.

• Energy efficiency, rather than people per se, drive climate change: energy efficiency represents the most effective way to reduce carbon emissions.

• Reducing carbon emissions can have substantial health benefits; consideration of human health should be integral to consideration of tackling climate change.

As a result of the projected increase in the number of people living in urban areas, **demographic trends are more significant for climate change than total population. Poor populations will be affected most.**

Impacts on human health

Improved sanitation, nutrition and healthcare will reduce the burden of disease and improve the health of the population. This will be particularly important in the context of climate change, as the health of the population will be affected by the impacts of climate change.

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WAYS FORWARD: COLLABORATION TO MEET THE CHALLENGES

The climate change debate should be more inclusive and should accentuate the role of local innovation in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions and population vulnerability.

Responding to climate change and to related challenges for population, development and human health will require a more integrated approach.

Closer collaboration is needed to: