

ANNOUNCEMENT

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

**International Workshop on
Health Consequences of Population Changes in Asia:
What Are the Issues?**

Organized by
Asian MetaCentre
for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis

Supported by
The Wellcome Trust
United Kingdom

Date
13-14 June 2002

Venue
Siam City Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

The Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis is organizing an APN workshop on Health Consequences of Population Changes in Asia: What Are the Issues to be held in Siam City Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand on 13-14 June 2002. This workshop, which focuses on population changes and health issues in particular, is designed as a special back-to-back workshop to the 2002 IUSSP Regional Population Conference on Southeast Asia's Population in a Changing Asian Context to be held in Bangkok on 10-13 June 2002 (information on the conference is available from <http://www.chula.ac.th/college/cps/IUSSP-2002/IUSSP-2002.html>).

Context and Scope

Population change has four main dimensions, comprising changes in: (i) size, (ii) age composition, (iii) mobility, and (iv) urbanization (distribution). As populations grow, age and move, various demographic and social characteristics change. These are accompanied by changes in levels and distribution of wealth. Historically, such changes have usually been accompanied by changes in levels of literacy, social modernization, political liberalization and public health infrastructure – all of which influence patterns of health and disease. Within Asia, there are, today, great differentials in levels of, and trends in, wealth, fertility, life expectancy and national population size. There is also a spectrum of political ideologies and systems. It is therefore difficult to generalize about how population change in Asia affects population health status. Further, the time-span connecting population change to health impact is very wide and elastic. Some demographic changes have immediate health consequences: for example, the increase in rural-urban-rural migration (often associated with expansion of urban job markets and downturns in rural economies) has contributed to the recent spread of HIV/AIDS. Other changes act indirectly and slowly: for example, the population-related increase in emission of greenhouse gases is changing global climatic conditions, which in turn will have various health consequences over coming decades.

Two of the main population drivers of health outcomes are urbanization and migration. The drift to the cities inevitably entails great changes – gains and losses – in risks to health. Education and access to health-care are increased; employment opportunities may be better (with the flow-on of benefits to family health). Meanwhile, slum-dwellers face various health risks (physical, microbial and other); the quality of air and water may be poor, especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods; urban transport systems pose physical and chemical (air quality) hazards; changes in dietary patterns and physical activity patterns contribute to obesity, metabolic disturbances and chronic disease processes; and changes in family and community relations can introduce tensions, conflict and mental health problems. Cities – while they may achieve some economies of scale – also tend to have large “ecological footprints” that contribute to distant and eventual global environmental changes and their health consequences.

Migration within and between countries occurs for reasons of economic hardship, political oppression and environmental decline. There has been a rapid increase in the number of refugees and labour migrants in Asia over the past two decades. Refugees and other hard-pressed migrants are prone to nutritional deprivation, infectious diseases (including in camps and detention centers), poverty, and the mental and psychological hazards of displacement. The main aim of this 2-day workshop is to explore what the most significant issues are with respect to the health consequences of population change in Asia. What are the most major population changes in the last few decades? What are the health impacts of these changes and where are they most keenly felt? Are these changes and impacts likely

to be transient or deep-seated? Can we anticipate any other changes in the next few decades? What have been done to cope with these changes and consequences? What resources are available and where are they most needed to meet the challenges posed by population change and their health consequences?

Invitation to Participate

The organisers invite your participation in raising issues relating to population changes and its health consequences, and discussing the challenges posed, for the first day of the workshop (13th June). Interested participants should submit their Curriculum Vitae (including research projects and list of publications), together with a completed registration form to:

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Applications should reach us by **15 March 2002** and notification of results can be expected by April 2002. For enquiries, please contact Ms Verene Koh at the above email or fax.

Registration Form