

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FREE STATE

RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHY AND POPULATION DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

INTRODUCTION

The call and global consensus on sustainable development is one of the most unifying forces ever witnessed in the recent history of humankind. This is derived from the painful realization that the earth's natural resources are being rapidly depleted and its carrying capacity significantly compromised. The world community is called upon to act responsibly by managing and subjecting all development initiatives within a framework for sustainable development.

South Africa is signatory to a number of international protocols which are aimed at promoting sustainable development and settlements. Population is a critical factor which affects the environment and development. Over the last ten years the population of the country has grown from 40.5 million to 49 million people in 2007. This growth and associated socio-economic variables have serious implications for the vision of government to redress inequalities and provide a better life for all.

To this end government has created enabling legislative frameworks, strategies and entities to advocate and promote sustainable socio-economic and environmental development. In 1996, the country adopted population policy which articulates government's position on how to coordinate and systematically integrate population issues into all policies, plans and strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of life.

Government equally recognizes the important role of research in developing sound, relevant and responsive policies, strategies and programmes. Development practitioners and institutions all over the world are also advocating for evidence based social policy and planning.

The Provincial Population Unit (PPU) has been created to promote and manage integration and implementation of population concerns and programmes into the service delivery mechanisms of government at all levels and ensuring that they are guided by researched data.

SOUTH AFRICA'S POPULATION CONCERNS

The eleven identified population concerns provide overarching and strategic issues which currently influence the development path of our country.

These are:

- ❖ Growth and structural dynamics of the population relative to the growth and coping capacity of the economy.
- ❖ Interactive pressure of population, production and consumption patterns on the environment.
- ❖ High incidence and severity of poverty in both rural and urban areas.
- ❖ Inequities in access to resources, infrastructure and social services and implications of redistribution and growth.
- ❖ Reduced human development potential.
- ❖ High rates of infant and maternal mortality.
- ❖ High rates of premature mortality attributable to preventable causes.

- ❖ Rising incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Marked gender inequalities in development opportunities.
- ❖ Poor knowledge base on population and population development relationships.
- ❖ Limited use of population data in development planning and service delivery.

GOAL OF THE PROGRAMME

Provide and manage research and population development systems that facilitate the implementation of evidence based development and population related policies and programmes.

OBJECTIVES

- a) To ensure an effective regulatory and programme framework for research and population development.
- b) To promote systematic integration of development and population concerns into policies, plans, programmes within all institutions of government and social partners.
- c) To develop and implement co-coordinated and multi-sectoral research and population development programmes.
- d) To develop and manage smart partnerships with stakeholders and resources organisations in promotion population development.
- e) To collect and provide reliable and up to date information o population and human development in the province.
- f) To monitor and evaluate implementation of population development programmes.

PROGRAMMES

- ❖ Advocacy, Information, Education and Communication (IEC)
- ❖ Social Development Research
- ❖ Development and support programmes
- ❖ Information Management
- ❖ Disaster Management

CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS

- ❖ Government Departments
- ❖ Municipalities
- ❖ Parastatals
- ❖ Research and other Institutions
- ❖ Civil Society Organisations
- ❖ United Nations Systems (UNFPA)
- ❖ Business
- ❖ Labour

COORDINATION

Prescribed coordination mechanisms such as government clusters and IDP forums provides strategic institutional framework for coordination of services.

The province is working towards developing new coordinated and support mechanisms such as networks of activists and practitioners in the fields of research, population, development and environmental management.

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