NEED OF A POLICY ADVOCACY FOR STABILISING POPULATION IN INDIA

Bishnu Charan Patro*

ABSTRACT

This paper describes how the issue of over-population is an irrelevant issue for the political class in India; as well as for the sorry state of affairs, it is critical of the bureaucrats and technocrats. At the same time, the paper narrates why and how ‘stabilized-population’ is the most important and an indispensable crucial issue for the overall socio-economic and technological development of India. It says that almost all the problems of India such as environment, housing, food, illiteracy, transportation, water, mass migration or unemployment, and so on; are the products or by-products of uncontrolled spiraling of population. It weighs the impact of ‘spill-over population’ on agriculture, food security, employment, housing, education, electricity, poverty, water, economy, etc.

The paper briefs the importance of ‘population’ in Five-Year Plans. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) has a lion’s share in the paper with the logic how policy advocacy at all levels such as political, legislative and executive; could make this issue of spiraling-population a peoples’ movement and how every citizen could be a ‘change-agent’ in this endeavour, what kind of ‘policy-changes’ are indispensable for ‘stabilising-population.’ The paper mentions that family-welfare communication has been a neglected area in India, though it is the first-ever country to have a nationwide family welfare programme. It adds that there is a yawning gap between planning and implementation of population-welfare programmes in the country that demands professional expertise from communication-alchemists with maverick ideas to make the things click. It also includes a developmental communication-model which could be applied for bringing the desired-changes for stabilizing population.

Key words: Over-population, Population stabilisation, Population policy, Poverty, Advocacy, Development, IEC.

*Sub-Editor (English), Department of Communication, National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Munirka, New Delhi-110067; E-mail: bishnucharanpatro@gmail.com
Prof. M. S. Swaminathan, a great thinker and a population scientist of modern India, had said, “If our population policy goes wrong, nothing else will go right.”

A pioneer of industrial revolution in India, JRD Tata, once warned the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, about the dangers of over-population. The latter had exclaimed, “What nonsense! Population is the strength of a country.” That mindset held sway, and the vicious circle of population, poverty and illiteracy, each contributing to the other, grew exponentially. When the panic button was pressed and coercive sterilizations were resorted to during emergency in the mid-seventies; that only created a fear, anger and a political backlash. The emergency’s net result was that ‘population control’ became a ‘fearful’ word. Since then, the establishment has chosen to use politically correct phrases like ‘population stabilization’ and ‘family welfare’. “Political commitment is a problem”, was the statement by a former India representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Michael Vlassoff.¹ The emergency factor has set the programme back by at least 15 years. The tragedy is that when the population eventually stabilizes, it will be in excess of billions. However, even the demographers and population scientists are not pretty sure and in a quandary to respond to the query, how much is too much? But going by the general conscience, over-population or spill-over population, in simple terms, means when the demands surpass the supplies. Over-population cannot be defined following the same yardstick for all the regions as influencing factors vary from one to another.

As on 18 July 2012, India’s population is more than 123 crore. 25.06 per cent of the Indian populace is illiterate. The population of India, at 1227.8 million, is almost equal to the combined population of U.S.A., Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Japan put together (1229.3 million)! The percentage decadal growth during 2001-2011 has registered the sharpest decline since Independence—a decrease of 3.90 percentage points from 21.54 to 17.64 per cent.² Uttar Pradesh only contributes a little less than 20 crore to the Indian population which is higher than the population of Brazil, the fifth most populated country in the globe. UP’s share of the country’s population will be 22 per cent by 2026. The combine population of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra is more than the population of the USA. The population of just one age group, males aged 0-4, is about 67 million, larger than the entire population of France. 51 per cent of India’s population is in the reproductive age-group. At the current growth rate, 157 million more people will be added by 2016. About 42 per cent of the population increase is contributed by births beyond two children per family. Though 188 million couples require contraceptive coverage, only 53 per cent of them are currently using contraceptives.³ According to National Family Health Survey-III, 2005-06, 56 per cent of the ever married women in the age group of 15-49 years, 58 per cent of pregnant women in the same age group and 79 per cent of the children in the

*=Reference used in the text.*
age group of 6-35 months were anaemic which pose a higher risk of infant and maternal deaths in India.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper are to:

- discuss how spillover population affects the development of a society, nation and the human well-being,
- deliberate the various socio-economic and developmental indicators that impacts the standard of living in India and their relation with population, and
- analyse how policy advocacy is crucial for stabilizing the spiraling population of India.

METHODOLOGY

To prepare the background/status paper for the USAID funded and Futures Group International, Washington D.C. and NIHFW supported Policy Project on Health, Nutrition and Population Development; the author went through various available secondary data sources dealing with different socio-economic developmental indicators those are responsible for deteriorating/increasing the standard of living of Indian populace. So many available literatures such as censuses, District-Level Household Surveys (DLHS), Reports, newspapers, magazines, etc. were reviewed for preparing the paper.

DISCUSSION

Population in the Context of Water, Agriculture, Food Security and Employment in the Agro-Sector: Our total annual requirement of fresh water resources is expected to increase to 1,050 cubic km by 2025; aggravated by pollution, the spectre of water famine stares at us. Despite rapid strides in agriculture, India’s food security is tenuous; per capita food grain production is a measly just a little more than 200 kg per year, just about beating the UN standard for famine-like conditions (below 200 kg per person per year). Per capita food grain production is predicated at around 190 kg by 2030. Worse, even the daily per capita consumption of 0.5 kg eludes one-third of Indians. The ideal diet is 400 kg per person per year. So, experts say India needs to produce at least 300 kg per person per year to be free from the hunger trap. The additional population demands the raising of food grain production from 40 lakh tonnes to 50 lakh tonnes, creating 30 lakh new non-agriculture jobs every year, and accommodating 50 lakh additional labourers in the crowded agro-sector which are far away from reality.
On the other hand, the Minister of State for Agriculture, Mr. Harish Rawat had stated in Rajya Sabha on 16 December 2011 that during the period of five years from 2006 to 2010, the per capita food grain availability per year fluctuated between 162 kg in 2006 to 160 kg in 2010. With such a bleak scenario of food availability in India, it is of utmost importance and urgency to contain the spill-over population.

**FIGURE 1**

**THE DWINDLING FOOD AVAILABILITY SCENARIO OF INDIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Food Grain Availability in Kg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Minister of State for Agriculture Harish Rawat in Rajya Sabha, 16 Dec. 2011)

**Population and Education:** The *Jansankhya Sthirata Kosh* (Population Stabilisation Fund) under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare says how it is not feasible for the policy-makers to make the provisions enshrined in the Right to Education Act (RTE-2009) a reality (Figure 2). The 1.65 crore addition to the population every year requires the opening of 66,000 new primary schools annually (current figure 6,000) which is an impossible proposition. Currently, only 80.28 per cent of the schools have the facility of drinking water while only 46.78 per cent have urinals and 39.82 per cent have lavatories. 5230 schools in rural areas and 784 schools in urban areas have no teacher at all while 13483 schools in rural belt and 1370 in urban belt have no room². For implementing Right To Education (RTE) in the next five years, 13.3 lakh new teachers are required out of which 3.9 lakh only in Uttar Pradesh and 2.2 lakh in Bihar. 9.43 lakh additional class rooms are required that includes 2.5 lakh each in UP and Bihar; and 33,405 pucca schools and 27000 kutcha schools require upgradation. 7 lakh girls’ toilets are required while 3.4 lakh schools require drinking water facilities. UP requires Indian rupees 38,000 crores; Bihar Indian rupees 26,000 crores.
Population, Electricity, Housing and Poverty: More than 40 crore people in India live without electricity, mostly in villages. 85 per cent of the Bihar population lives in households without an electricity connection. According to United Nations’ Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), India is home to 63 per cent of all slum dwellers in South Asia which amounts to 170 million people, 17 per cent of the world’s total slum dwellers. Urban poverty in India is over 25 per cent. 54.71 percent of urban slums have no toilet facility. India ranked 66th on the 2008 Global Hunger Index of 88 countries, as per the report released by the Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). India has the highest number of undernourished people in the world—230 million, 1.5 million children are at the risk of becoming malnourished because of rising global food prices. More than 27 per cent of the world’s undernourished population lives in India, of whom 43 per cent children (under five years) are underweight. The figure is higher than the global average of 25 per cent and even beats Sub-Saharan Africa’s figure of 28 per cent. Nearly 50 per cent of child deaths in India occur due to malnutrition.

Population and Environment: That 17.5 per cent of the world’s population lives on just 2.4 per cent of the land creates its own pressures. We, in India, have already lost 15 per cent of forest cover between 1981 and 1991. India’s forest cover has declined by 367 sq km between 2007 and 2009. Per capita availability of forest land has been decreased from 0.113 hectare in 1950-51 to 0.071 in 1998-99. Similarly, in a period of 50 years, per capita availability of agricultural land in rural areas has also been reduced from 0.638 hectare in 1950-51 to 0.271

---

### FIGURE 2

**HOW THE FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME OF RTE IS A DAY-DREAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right to Education?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 25.06 % of the Indian populace is illiterate (Census-2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 13.3 lakh new teachers required: UP (3.9 lakh); Bihar (2.2 lakh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 9.43 lakh additional class rooms required: UP (2.5 lakh); Bihar (2.5 lakh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 33,405 pucca schools and 27000 kuccha schools require upgradation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 7 lakh girls’ toilets required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 3.4 lakh schools require drinking water facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• UP requires Rs. 38,000 crores, Bihar 26,000 crores in the next five year for implementing RTE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: JSK.org)
in 1998-99. The number of households with plastic/polythene roof has increased from 0.4 per cent in 2001 to 0.6 per cent in 2011. According to a survey by Centre for Transforming India (CTI), traffic jams in Delhi cost Delhites Rs. 10 crore and the government exchequer Rs 1.5 crore per day. With nearly 1,000 new vehicles being added to Delhi roads every day and the capacity of roads already stretched, experts feel the only way to bring down congestion levels is to develop a sound public transport system that commuters can shift to. The traffic assessment study reveals that on any given day, one-third of the 60 lakh vehicles registered in the city are on the roads. Each of these, on an average, wastes 1.6 litres (2.5 litres for cars and 0.75 litres for two-wheelers), which works out to a total wastage of 30 lakh litres of fuel a day.

So, whether it is environment problem, housing problem, or food, or illiteracy, or transportation, water, mass migration or unemployment, and so on; all are the products or by-products of uncontrolled spiraling of population. In other words, we can say that ‘Population Explosion’ is the mother of all these problems we all are facing today.

The National Population Policy-2000 has three categories of objectives- (i) immediate objective covered to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure and health personnel; (ii) medium-term objective included bringing down the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) to the replacement-level by 2010; while (iii) the long-term objective was to achieve a stable-population by 2045, at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection. India’s first Five-Year Plan (1951-56), formulated more than 60 years back also said almost the same thing, “The recent increase in the population of India and the pressure exercised on the limited resources of the country have brought to the forefront the urgency of the problem of family planning and population control. … … It is, therefore, apparent that population control can be achieved only by the reduction of the birth rate to the extent necessary to stabilize the population at a level consistent with the requirements of national economy.”

There has been an increase in public health investment in the country. The combined revenue and capital expenditure of the Centre and states on medical and public health, water supply and sanitation and family welfare has increased from Rs.53,057.80 crore in 2006-07 to Rs. 96,672.79 crore in 2010-11 (BE). In addition to increasing resource allocation for the Health Sector the Government is also playing a critical role in facilitating access to health care delivery channels, public and private through subsidized health, insurance schemes like the RSBY for providing basic health care to poor and marginal workers. The Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) is being extended to cover MGNREGA beneficiaries and
beedi workers. This has been stated in Economic Survey 2011-12, presented by the Finance Minister, Sh. Pranab Mukherjee in the Lok Sabha on 15 March 2012.

The Survey highlights that the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) launched on 1 June 2011 to give free entitlements to pregnant women and sick newborns for cashless delivery, C-Section, drugs and consumables, diagnostics, diet during stay in the health institutions, provision of blood, exemption from user charges, transport from home to health institutions, transport between facilities in case of referral, and drop back from institutions to home. A sum of Rs.1437 crore has been allocated to the states during 2011-12 under the JSSK. In order to reach out to difficult, inaccessible, backward and under-served areas with poor health indicators, 264 high focus districts in 21 states have been identified based on concentration of SC/ST population and presence of left-wing extremism for focused attention. A Mother and Child Tracking system has been introduced, which provides complete data of the mothers with their addresses, telephone numbers, etc. for effective monitoring of ante-natal and post-natal check-up of mothers and immunization services.

The survey also points out that the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), which targets lowering of Maternal Mortality Ratio by ensuring that deliveries are conducted by skilled birth attendants, has shown rapid growth in last three years, with number of beneficiaries rising to 106.96 lakh in 2010-11 from 90.37 lakh in 2008-09. The issue of governance, transparency, and grievance redressal mechanisms are now the thrust areas for the JSY.9

Population in the Five-Year Plans

Since, Economic and Social Planning are linked to Population and Family Planning; and both these subjects are the joint responsibilities of both the Centre as well as the States and Union Territories; these two subjects are enlisted at numbers 20 and 20-A respectively of the List-III (Concurrent List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India; under the joint domain of the governments of the Centre, and States and Union Territories. The very first Five-Year Plan of India emphasised on the need for a stabilised population and the successive Five-Year plans also stressed on the urgency of stabilising population.10

The concept of Family Welfare Communication has been a neglected area in India although it is the first-ever country in the globe to initiate a nation-wide family welfare programme way back in 1952. Currently, India adds a person to its population in every two seconds but the irony is that one-third of its population lives in drastic conditions. One of the major reasons for this sorry state of affairs is that ‘our communication for their welfare is very blurred’. Everything goes
well in India when it comes to ‘planning’ of any developmental project or any welfare programme/scheme but it severely falls flat on the surface due to poor ‘implementation’. The existing practice by most of our policy-makers or researchers pertaining to family welfare or population stabilization is more or less stereotyped and hackneyed by nature. To make the family welfare programme in the country a success and to bring the desired changes, we badly require ‘communication alchemists’ with maverick ideas forthwith.\textsuperscript{11} As far as population stabilisation in India is concerned, political unwillingness acts as a roadblock. But only politicians are not to be blamed for this sorry state of affairs. Bureaucrats are the advisors to the politicians and technocrats also play a major role in policy-formulation. So, all the links in the chain that include the technocrats, bureaucrats and the political leaders are to be equally blamed for this uncontrolled over-population.\textsuperscript{11}

**Need for Policy Advocacy**

If the current fertility trends continue, the population of UP will be 325 million in 2031, and 441 million in 2051 (PFI). In five decades, the population will increase by 270 million. The density of the population will increase from the current 578 persons per sq. km. to 1,498 persons in 2051—almost a three-fold increase. About 10 districts in UP would have more than 10 million people and another 18 districts will have more than 6 million. This huge increase in population will exert enormous pressure on natural resources and has the potential to frustrate all attempts to improve the quality of life of the people and to achieve sustainable development. Therefore, there is an urgent need to develop people-friendly policies and strategies, to mobilize all possible resources in all sectors, and to energize the systems to reach replacement-level of fertility by 2016 and to attain population stabilization as soon as possible, thereafter.

The Population Policy must look at the issues related to population stabilization in a holistic, open and transparent manner. Population stabilization cannot be achieved without addressing the health issues related to women and children. The status of women, gender equity, literacy, reduction of infant and maternal mortality, improved health and nutrition status of mothers and children have long been recognized as key determinants of fertility behaviour and are the central issues of population policy. To achieve replacement-level of fertility, all development departments have to work in cohesion, and the synergy generated will not only help population stabilization efforts but also the objectives of various departments working to improve the quality of life of the people.\textsuperscript{12}

Though much ground has been gained in several areas of family welfare and health care, there is very much more yet to be done. Inconsistent results from the past family welfare and population stabilization campaigns call for a workable strategy for the
purpose. Powerful, relevant and professional communication methods are crucial in bridging the yawning-gaps between the planners and adopters. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategies must be area-specific, need-based and community-oriented which should focus on students and teachers of schools, colleges and universities; religious leaders, celebrities, local leaders, NGOs and the civil society leaders and other opinion-makers. IEC campaigns should be multi-pronged and multi-media with special focus on inter-personal communication which is stronger than all other media. The media chosen should include all kinds of print media such as newspapers, dailies, weeklies, monthlies, newsletters; electronic media such as radio, television; outdoor media like posters, wall-paintings, hoardings, bill-boards, hydrogen balloons, buffoons/clowns, mascots, autos, taxis, inside and outside of all kinds of trains and other transports, boats, motor lunches, etc.; and the new media like the internet, mobile phones and tablets.

Since, the people’s representatives belonging to various political parties play the major role in formulation of policies, they need to undergo Advocacy on Population. When these political representatives will raise the issues of population and family welfare in their public meetings as well as in other official meetings; these will send across a message to the bureaucrats in the respective areas that the political representatives are quite concerned about these issues. As a result, they will show seriousness on the alarming issues and instruct the technocrats and others concerned such as the medical and paramedical staff and also universities, institutions, medical colleges to act accordingly. Social activists, social scientists, NGOs, SHGs, religious leaders, opinion makers, panchyat pradhans and school teachers will form a group who act as change agents at the ground level. Similarly, women groups like Mahila Mandals, Bhajan Mandals, Army Officers’ Wife Organisation, etc.; and media owners and media personnel need to be properly advocated about how to put the issue of population stabilisation at top of their agenda to turn the country a ‘Developed Nation.’

The basket of advocacy tools must include fact-sheets, power-point presentations, information brochures, messages group discussions and various other media materials like feature films, short-films, stickers, booklets, leaflets, and social-advertising campaigns centred around over-population, gender-equity, family planning, small-family, spacing methods, contraception, girl-child, male’s role in family planning, NSV, etc. It has been observed that hitherto, we’ve failed to tap the plentiely available services of the media for dissemination of population-stabilisation related messages. Special screenings of films on the said-issues in educational institutes, villages and in other areas will definitely sensitise the targeted audiences and change their irrational behaviour and attitude towards such issues. For example, to drive home important social messages in a viewer-
friendly manner, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has commissioned feature films by eminent directors like Shyam Benegal, Amol Palekar and Kalpana Lajmi. Amol Palekar’s *Kairee* on the girl child has been praised a lot for its lucidity and presentation. Similarly, Shyam Benegal’s *Hari Bhari* on family welfare has been widely appreciated and Kalpana Lajmi’s *Daman* that looks at violence against women has a spine chilling scenes that reflects the realities happening in our societies which need to be promoted across India. Both *Kairee* and *Hari Bhari* have received the President’s award for socially relevant films at the National Film Festival.13

With well-known artistes like Shabana Azmi, Nandita Das, Raveena Tandon acting in them, these movies have the power to appeal and influence the women folk of our country as well as in other parts of the world. In fact, Shyam Benegal’s *Hari Bhari* tells the story of Muslim women’s struggle over their fertility better than reams of material. The film tells the story of five Muslim women of a family in western UP. The men’s reluctance to go in for vasectomy, their ire at the woman for not producing a male child and the circumstances that compels parents to marry off young girls are brought out in a poignant manner by Benegal. Although the film is a fictional saga of a family, it is based on actual case studies from the region. What is wonderful is that it is positive film. Almost all the women are able to come out of the circumstances that keep them down. Other socially relevant films commissioned by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare include *Dharini* by Sushant Mishra, *Betia* by Ashok Chakradhar and *Anandam* in Tamil.

Similarly, students can be sensitized through a tiger’s sticker which could have India’s declining tiger population from 3642 in the 1990s to just over 1400 during 2002-2008 along with the comparative figures of human population for the same period. This kind of creative, innovative and informative posters/stickers could be put on the walls, books, doors, vehicles, etc. for the repeated viewing of the targeted audiences which will influence their mindset towards such important issues. Eye-caching visuals, ear-friendly audios along with heart-touching messages centred on girl-child, appropriate and legal age at marriage, uncontrolled and over-population, unplanned pregnancy, female foeticide and infanticide, contraceptive methods, spousal communication for family planning, etc. must be developed with the help of professional advertising agencies to have an impact on the masses.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is very much required to make the population-stabilisation programme a ‘people’s programme’. Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries
(FICCI), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industries of India (ASSOCHAM), Broadcasters Association of India (BAI), Indian Newspapers Society (INS), Newspaper Editors’ Guild and other professional bodies must be roped in to create a nation-wide awareness and sensitisation wave through various creative and innovative methods. For example, manufacturers and marketers of fast-moving consumer goods can be asked to put a family-planning, small-family, girl-child, related picture or message or both on the cover of the products such as soap, shampoo, tea-packet, chips/biscuit packet, sanitary napkin, match-stick box, spices, sugar and salt and so on. Business houses could also be asked to distribute contraceptives such as condoms and female condoms along with some of their products chosen strategically. In the same manner, the newspaper and magazine owners can be asked to put such messages and pictures at a prominent space of each of the issues of the publications for the greater benefit of the society. The TV channel owners can be asked to run crawlers or show spots of 10-20 second duration on the said issues as part of their corporate social responsibility and as a duty towards the nation. It may be made mandatory on the part of the TV channels to spread these messages through their serials during prime-time and during important sports-events being telecast live. As per the government guidelines, all private and regional language TV channels should allot telecast time for family welfare programmes. Appropriate measures should be taken by the government to ensure its effective implementation. Religious leaders must be roped in to have such kind of posters at strategic locations of their shrines like entrance and exit-points etc. The same kind of posters and hoardings could be placed at the entrance of stadia, theatres, markets places and other strategic locations.

Outdoor and new-media should have an equal role in disseminating information on the issues. Mid-media tools such as two-wheeler/four-wheeler stepney covers, hoods of auto-rickshaws/rickshaws, inside and outside bodies of taxis and other public transport facilities such as buses and trains must carry such visuals and messages. New-media tools like the mobile phones, tablets and internet may play a pivotal role in spreading these messages resulting in sensitising the target audiences and creating awareness about such vital issues and subjects those have taken a back-seat for some time now. The role of folk media cannot be kept in reserve as long as sensitising the rural community is concerned.

It is strongly felt that the issue of ‘Over-Population’ or ‘Undesired Population Growth’ must be an integral, inseparable and vital part of the policies of all the ministries and departments of the Union Government as well as the State Governments. On the lines of National Vigilance-Awareness Week, Traffic-Safety Week and Hindi Week; National Population-Stabilisation Week/Fortnight/Month
must be observed vigorously in educational institutions, autonomous bodies, PSUs, government offices and also in the private organisations across the country and Indian Embassies/Consulates as well as schools and universities abroad to achieve the goals of population stabilisation. To generate some amount of money for ‘Population Stabilisation’; like ‘Education Cess’, the policy-makers can also think of having a ‘Population Cess’ in the electricity bills, telephone bills, gas bills, and on other FMCG and durable products which must be exclusively invested for population causes only. Various competitions like quiz, essay, poster-making, debate for various categories of students must be organised at the block, district, state and national level on the issues of small-family, over-population, girl-child, women empowerment, etc.

The programme of population stabilisation must not be handled in isolation and must not be a programme to be dealt only by the MoHFW. There should be inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination between the Home Ministry, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of HRD, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Rural Development, etc. to attain population-stabilisation. Through the MHRD, agencies like NCERT, CBSE, UGC, AICTE, etc. could be mobilised to incorporate appropriate population-related text content, visuals, messages in the text-books at various stages. There is a need to revamp and strengthen the District Field-Publicity Units under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to disseminate such information with the use of the local folk media which has been weakened during the preceding years.

For the communication and advocacy purpose, the below-given Circular Communication Model has been developed. This model emphasizes on the ‘continuity of communication between the service providers and the service users’ since communication is always a continuous as well as a two-way process. The model is centred on the basic principles of communication that requires a ‘conducive environment’ both for the benefit of the sender and the receiver. To get the desired changes and results in the communication process, it basically requires an effective planning that sets the desired goals to achieve; pre-testing for bringing the necessary rectifications before implementing it; implementation; intervention for again blocking the leakage points in the programme leading to further improving and enhancing the desired output; monitoring and evaluation resulting in achieving the desired behavioural and attitudinal changes in the mindset of the targeted audiences.
Acknowledgement: The author expresses his sincere thanks to Prof. Jayanta K. Das, Director, NIHFW; and Prof. N.K. Sethi, former Director, NIHFW; and Ex-Senior Advisor (Health), Planning Commission of India; for their consistent support and encouragement. The Problem of Spillover-Population: Are We at the Crossroads of Confusion? is an abridged version of the Background paper written by the author in the capacity of Communication and Advocacy Officer of the Policy Project on Health, Nutrition and Population Development, NIHFW, New Delhi. The paper has been presented in the 1st National Consultative Meeting of the Policy Project on 16 March 2012. The Policy Project is funded by the United States’ Agency for International Development (USAID) with support from the Futures Group International, Washington DC; and the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (NIHFW), New Delhi.

REFERENCES


7. India is still world’s hunger capital (2012. 22 February). Prasenjit Chowdhury, Deccan Herald, Bangalore.

8. Delhi wastes Rs. 11.5 cr in traffic jams daily (2009, 15 October).


