



GOVERNMENT OF GHANA

NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY
(Revised Edition, 1994)

AT A GLANCE

National Population Council

RATIONALE

To affirm the commitment of the Government of Ghana to population issues, an explicit National Population Policy was adopted in 1969. The Policy was revised in 1994 to incorporate the following emerging issues:

- HIV/AIDS
- Environment
- The aged, persons with disability, etc.

POPULATION PROFILE

Total Population	-	16.0m
Growth Rate	-	3.0
Population Doubling Time	-	24 years
Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	-	5.5
Average Life Expectancy	-	58
Infant Mortality Rate	-	66 per 1,000
Maternal Mortality Rate	-	214 per 100,000
Percent of Population Under 15	-	48.2
Percent of Population Above 65	-	3.6
Dependency Ratio	-	100
Percent Urban Population	-	32
Population Density	-	52 km sq.
Sex Ratio	-	97.6

GOAL

To achieve and maintain a level of population growth which is consistent with national development objectives in order to improve the quality of life for the populace.

OBJECTIVES

The major objectives of the policy are:

- To integrate population issues into all aspects of the development planning process.

- To reduce the high levels of morbidity and mortality.
- To ensure accessibility to, and affordability of, family planning means and services for all couples and individuals to enable them regulate their fertility.
- To educate the youth on population matters which directly affect them such as sexual relationship, fertility regulations, adolescent health, marriage and child bearing, in order to guide them towards responsible parenthood and small family sizes.
- To educate the population about the causes, consequences and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- To promote sound social welfare programmes that would take care of the special needs of the youth, the aged, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- To enhance women's rights and status within the society.
- To educate the population on environmental conservation.
- To ensure that the Law Reform Commission, Parliament and other law-making agencies are well sensitized on population issues so that the law will serve as an effective instrument for promoting the objectives of the Population Policy.

TARGETS

Major targets include the following;

- To reduce the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) from 5.5. to 5.0 by the year 2000 and then to 3.0 by the year 2020. To achieve a Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) of 15% for modern Family Planning methods by the year 2000 and 50% by the year 2020.
- To reduce the current annual population growth rate of about 3% to 1.5% by the year 2020.
- To reduce the infant mortality rate from its current level of 66 infant deaths per 1000 live births to 22 by the year 2020.

- To reduce the maternal mortality rate from its current level of about 220 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births to 55 by the year 2020.
- To reduce proportion of women below 20 years and above 34 years having births to 50 percent by the 2010 and to 80 percent by 2020.
- To increase the proportion of females with secondary and higher education to 50% by the year 2005 and to 80% by 2020.
- To increase life expectancy of the population from its current level of about 58 years to 70 years by the year 2020.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Maternal & Child Health (MCH)

- Re-organizing the Primary Health Care (PHC) system to ensure improved accessibility and affordability to health care services.
- Expanding Safe Motherhood programmes.
- MCH policies and programmes will be implemented as integral parts of a broad-based strategy of promoting reproductive and sexual health of all including adolescents.

Family planning and Fertility Regulation

- Improving the decentralized health care and Family Planning delivery system.
- Promoting an enabling environment for participation of NGO's, and the Private Sector.

Health and Welfare

- The vigorous implementation of a National Health Policy shall be pursued. The implementation of the Primary Health Care System as the main focus of Health care delivery in Ghana shall be intensified. Maximum community participation in the formulation and management of health services shall be promoted.

- Health policies and programmes shall continue to be integrated into sectors such as education, agriculture, employment, urban/rural and regional Planning.

Food and Nutrition

- Steps shall be taken to strengthen, promote and sustain increased food production and land productivity through the introduction of appropriate high-yielding, quick maturing and disease-resistant plant strains and animal breeds, in order to enhance the nutritional status of the population.
- To evolve and implement a comprehensive food and nutrition policy that takes cognizance of the wide-ranging needs of various segments of the population especially the poor.

Education

- Subject to the availability of resources, free and compulsory universal basic education shall be provided. Policies and programmes that encourage girls to continue schooling up to at least the secondary school level will be vigorously pursued.
- Efforts will be made to promote adult education as well as basic and functional literacy with a bias towards the maintenance of family values, reproductive health, population and development interrelationships.

Empowerment of Women

- Strategies shall be evolved to ensure an improvement in the status of women through the removal of various traditional, legal, administrative and cultural barriers to their effective participation in nation building.
- Programmes shall be pursued to improve and protect the legal rights of women. All forms of discrimination against women shall be eliminated as provided for in International Convention to which Ghana is signatory.

The Role of Men in Family Welfare

- Programmes shall be designed and implemented to promote awareness among men on their responsibility for adequate care of their families.
- Adolescent male and adult male clients will be specifically targeted in the provision of family planning and IEC services.

Children and Youth

- Employment and income generation programmes shall be set up to enhance the income capacity of parents and guardians, especially mothers, in order to promote better child care and maintenance.
- Steps will be taken to set up or strengthen existing community-based and other appropriate support programmes for the displaced, homeless street children, orphans, and delinquents.

The Aged and Persons with Disabilities

- Campaigns will be made to enhance public awareness about the needs of the aged and people with disabilities within the traditional family set up.
- Laws pertaining to the rights of the aged and the disabled will be enacted or where they already exist, will be enforced.

Population and Law

- Appropriate legal measures shall be taken to protect and support the family which is the basic unit of the society, and protect the rights of the more vulnerable members of the family units such as children, the divorced and widowed.
- Strong links shall be established between law-making, population activities and social research to ensure that laws and population programmes are not only rooted in our culture but are also socially responsible to the needs of the people.

Population Information, Education, Communication and Motivation (PIEC&M)

- A national communication policy shall be developed with population IEC &M as an integral part of it.
- PIEC & M shall be integrated into all sectors of development planning and activity.

Internal Migration & Spatial Distribution of the Population

- Promoting a more balanced or equitable development.
- Improving the social conditions in deprived areas.

International Migration

- Laws and other procedural rules governing immigration and emigration shall be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that these are in consonance with contractual obligations under international agreements and that the migration flows do not adversely affect the nation's manpower and other developmental needs. Exchange of experts and other skilled personnel, which promotes south to south cooperation within the framework of bilateral or multilateral agreements, will receive special attention.
- The government will cooperate, negotiate and liaise with other national governments and international agencies to ensure that the lives, properties and rights of its nationals who travel to reside or work in other countries, whether temporary or permanently, are fully protected in accordance with laws, norms and conventions of international practice.

Environmental Programmes

- Developing and enforcing laws and regulations that protect the environment.
- Ensuring judicious exploitation of the nation's natural resources.

Housing Strategies

- Review and promote implementation of a national housing policy.
- Encourage, support and sustain research into all aspects of housing, including the use of local materials, building designs and appropriate technology.

Poverty Reduction

- Efforts shall be made to promote, develop and sustain the informal sector to play a vital role in employment generation and thereby contribute to the reduction of poverty.
- Programmes shall be developed to reduction the suffering of rural and urban poor and other specially disadvantaged groups within the society.

Labour Force & Employment

- Adopting and implementing a comprehensive manpower and employment planning policy which takes cognizance of the needs of both the public and private sectors.
- Emphasizing and promoting vocational and technical education tailored to job creation and the needs of the labour market.

Data Collection and Analysis, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Ensuring timely collection, processing analysis and dissemination of data to policy makers, planners and the public at large.
- Establishing a management information network system including a data bank to support all population activities.

Training and Institutional Capacity Building

- There will be established a comprehensive human resource/manpower policy for the recruitment, training, remuneration, retention and usage of staff working on the population programme.
- There will be an intensive training of population and health related development personnel in the local and regional educational institutions to promote national self-sufficiency and execution of programmes.

Resource Mobilization

- Government shall make available to the National Population Council (NPC) necessary resources to enable it to function effectively.
- Government shall provide guidelines for mobilizing external assistance for population programmes to ensure proper coordination and maximum utilization of resources to enhance programme impact at national sectoral and district levels.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The National Population Council Secretariat (NPCS)

The NPC is serviced by a Secretariat, which acts as a focal point in the formulation and management of population programmes and activities in the country. It also facilitates, monitors, co-ordinates and evaluates the implementation of the policy and programmes, and foster linkages among sector ministries and agencies. Among other functions, the NPCS is to;

- Undertake population research and analysis.
- Establish and operationalize a national programme for research, monitoring, evaluation of population policies and programmes and develop a national population data bank to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of population related information; and
- Liase with donor agencies with a view to regulating and co-ordinating internal and external resource mobilization.

Technical Committees

Technical Advisory Committees (TACs)

The NPC has five technical advisory committees. These committees are responsible for the following schedules of the Council.

- (i) Population Policy
- (ii) Reproductive Health/Family Planning Services
- (iii) Information, Education and Communication
- (iv) Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
- (v) Training

Technical Co-ordinating Committee (TCC)

The TCC harmonizes and co-ordinates the work of the various technical committees.

Decentralization

- In line with government policy on decentralization, the NPC has offices in all the ten (10) regional Capitals and two (2) districts. They work closely with the political administrative units of the country especially the District Assemblies and the various communities to design and implement population programmes and activities.
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National Development Planning Commission (NDPC)

The NDPC is responsible for national development planning, and collaborates with the NPC in arriving at realistic goals and targets in the field of population.

Government and Private Organizations

- **Government Agencies:** The Ministry of Health (MOH), being a key actor in the health needs of the population, will be encouraged to continue to play its leading role in the health sector. Furthermore, population units will be established in the Ministries of Education, Food and Agriculture, Employment and Social Welfare, Information and Justice.
- **Private Organisation and NGOs:** All voluntary organizations would be encouraged to register with the Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development (GAPVOD). In addition GAPVOD will be assisted to co-ordinate effectively the population activities of these organizations to ensure optimum utilization of their resources.

Government and Donor Support

Government has proposed the setting up of an Inter Agency Co-ordinating Committee (IACC) to be made up of representatives of Government, Donor Agencies and NGOs, in the field of population, health and family planning. The IACC is expected to promote greater collaboration between donor agencies and Government to ensure that the country derives maximum benefit from donor assistance in the implementation of the policy.

CONCLUSION

The successful implementation of the policy objectives is dependent on the determined effort and continued partnership between the Government of Ghana, public and private sectors, NGOs, Donor Agencies and the people of Ghana.

The policy therefore represents both a challenge and an opportunity for all stakeholders to actively support and promote the objectives stated in it, in order to ensure a vibrant prosperous Ghana.