Components and Public Health Impact of Population Growth in the Arab World

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Abstract : Arab World that comprises of 22 member states of Arab League undergoes rapid transition in demographic front - fertility, mortality and migration. A distinctive geographic region spread across West Asia and North East Africa unified by Arabic language shares common values and characteristics even though diverse in economic and political conditions. Demographic lag that characterizes Arab World is unique but the present trend of declining fertility combined with the existing relatively low mortality undergoes significant changes in its population size. The current research aimed at (i) assessing the growth of population, over a period of 3 decades, (ii) exploring the components and (iii) understanding the public health impact. Based on International Data Base (IDB) of US Census Bureau, for 3 time periods – 1992, 2002 and 2012; 21 countries of Arab World have been analyzed by dividing them into four geographic sectors namely Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), West Asia, Maghreb and Nile Valley African Horn. Population of Arab World grew widely during the past both through natural growth and migration. Immigrations pronounced especially in the resource intensive GCC nations not only from East Asian and central African countries but also from resource thrifty Arab nations. Migrations within the Arab World as well as outside of the Arab World remark an interesting demographic phenomenon that requires further research. But the transformations on public health statistics – impact of demographic change – depict a new era in the Arab World.
Keywords : demographic change, public health statistics, net migration, natural growth, geographic sectors, fertility and mortality, life expectancy