

2020: Taking the Blinders Off and Looking to the Future with Implications

Executive Summary

The human population of the world is literally dying off, driven by decades of worldwide wars, genocides around the world, the disappearance of women, plummeting birthrates post worldwide 2008-2018 recession, and the upcoming post-lockdown world of COVID-19. The lockdown world of COVID-19 has created an expected tsunami of non-COVID, current, ongoing, and future deaths due to the denial of care to billions, including mental health care, and the anticipated worldwide economic collapses and starvation that will eclipse the damage done by COVID-19, considering current data points to a lack of preparedness, and governmental mismanagement, specifically related to nursing homes and health care systems, that left societies vulnerable; and that led to potentially unnecessary death rates that exceeded flu death rates, primarily for those over the age of sixty. We have become, as a society, so focused on the past, assuming historical population growth rates, and righting the wrongs of the past, that we are failing to see and to understand, that out of sheer necessity and based on world demographics, the world is literally in the midst of a rebalancing that started in 2010 and that will run through 2030. There is no choice but to incorporate all people and cultures in order to stabilize the world and protect the future. There is no one country that will be left untouched by the current demographic shifts, and it is realistic that the worldwide population may decrease by over twenty percent by 2040!

Today, there are not enough working age people alive in the world today to maintain the status quo. Demographers all over the world that have been predicting the future needs of society, from food to energy, have been using “baseline assumptions” for decades that are based on a continuous population growth, with zero consideration for reality! The world demographics today are primarily composed of almost one-third of people over the age of sixty, and less than thirty percent under the age of thirty, with less than fifteen percent being women in their childbearing years, fifteen to forty, most over the age of thirty. The past decade has seen a complete flatline of the worldwide population, if not a decrease! It is so obvious that it has happened unnoticed by people that should be monitoring it; but since it is an uncomfortable truth, many are afraid to even bring up the issue for discussion around the world. The social discord of today can be viewed as a direct result of the imbalance of both urban-rural systems and urban-centered demographics being imbalanced with regards to people being able to be in relationships, due to the lack of available partners, and lack of economic opportunities. The third-world countries are facing the same issues and are not able to help balance out the needs of the industrialized nations through immigration. One can consider a few other examples from around the world.

These are examples of items one can review and consider: (1) less than fifteen percent of the world’s population are women of child-bearing age, (2) worldwide birth rates have been below the theoretical population replacement rate without considering death rates, (3) the decades long China one-child policy has left the country with a severe population imbalance below the population replacement rate, (4) the desire not to give birth to girls in India, for financial reasons, has led to an unfathomable imbalance of more than twenty percent more men than women in the country, if not greater, with millions of expected births of girls having literally disappeared, annually, for over a decade, (5) the flood of immigrants into Europe from the Middle East, Arab Spring and Syrian war, from at least 2010, has primarily been males with few females, which is realistically due to most of the women having been killed during the conflicts, including honor killings, and (6) there are many countries that have been torn apart, millions of young people killed, young women too, due to the illegal drug trade, leaving these countries decimated; and needing help to recover from the damage done by the drug trade, growing more intense as the world ages and governments start legalizing and distributing the drugs.

The old systems designed and predicated on an ever increasing world population and the need for addressing future population growth, through a growth at any expense philosophy, under the guise of progress, have collapsed; and people around the world, governmental and economic resource planners, must immediately take the situation seriously; and adjust and redirect resources to where they are now needed, and will be needed in the near future! The shifting of resources needs to address the decade long zero-population growth and the easily predictable, based on demographics, population aging and decrease of the next two decades. Holistically, one can simply consider the following demographic data example, and one can easily project into the future the issues that are currently being exposed, during the COVID-19 crisis. In 2009, worldwide demographics, during the H1N1 Swine Flu crises, were significantly younger, less than fifteen percent of the population was over the age of 65, while over thirty percent was under the age of 30. From a health care system perspective, we need to realign all future healthcare resources and investment into localized and community-based care, as COVID-19 has exposed the extremely high risks of concentrating all health care resources into centralized urban environments, which has only enhanced the explosive and deadly spread of COVID-19 and the incredibly high mortality rates for those over age 65.

Implications – Four Examples

Health Care Systems

The health care systems of the future need to reverse course on today's massive consolidation into the urban cities and redistribute resources throughout rural communities, especially from a health-risk perspective, preparing for future pandemics. The city centers can be the centers for highly specialized care; however, all primary care and non-specialized care and procedures, capable of being completed on an outpatient basis, should be distributed out to community-based health care systems. These systems need to be managed by Medical Doctors and Clinicians, not Bureaucrats or Businesspeople, and operated in partnership with the leadership of the local communities that they serve.

Nutrition Planning

When analyzing the future needs of Food and Food Security around the world, all the planning must be completely redone to address a declining world population, an aging world population, and the need to redistribute food around the world in a safe and timely manner to address emergencies and starvation.

Urban Planning

With an expected demographic reduction in the workforce, the work-from-home movement, and the desire of retirees to live in suburban and rural communities, back-porch communities (low maintenance small house with a fenced in yard, a garden, and back deck with a grill), outside the cities, making the old new again (homes had interior open spaces), one needs to note the need for massive skyscrapers in dense urban environments will decrease for decades, and planning must be done to prepare for the conversion of urban land back to green-space, as has happened in Detroit, MI, USA, around the world.

Energy Planning

From a planning perspective, again, the analysis for future needs must be addressed with a specific plan for a decreasing population, not an increasing population! With the shift to green energy that has already occurred, and potentially decreasing need, including fossil fuels, what are the implications?