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Emerging Social Issues Division

Social Policy and Population Section

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Article **Population and Sustainable Development: The Critical Role of Good Governance**

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Abstract Adverse demographic trends are often invoked as harbingers of doom for Pacific island countries. More positively, governments and development agencies are tasked with identifying and pursuing paths to more viable prospects. The debate over what actions are practical is deeply divided. At the heart of this debate are the ways in which Pacific island countries can best utilize their human resources, so that they do not become an impoverished backwater of globalism. This article outlines the agendas of the main development agencies, many of which are informed more by global concerns than by those of the Pacific islands; describes how these agendas are being put into action; and considers some of their likely impacts on vulnerable groups within the Pacific island populations. It concludes by identifying some important gaps in human resources development.

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