

The study of population patterns and change is known as **demography**. There are many global issues connected to population. Since the earth has limited resources, changes in the world's population will affect the allocation, use, and distribution of these resources. The size and characteristics of a country's population can have economic, social, environmental, and political consequences for people living there.

Let's look at an example. Suppose you live in a country where most of the people are under the age of 18 years old. What if most of the people living in that country could not provide food, clothing, or shelter for themselves? Who would help them?

In this unit, we will explore questions about population, migration and urbanization such as:

- How do social scientists investigate population issues?
- How are population, migration, and urbanization issues connected?
- In what ways are issues related to population, migration and urbanization global problems?
- How do social, political, and economic decisions societies make reflect and influence demographics?

It is hard to imagine how many people there are on the planet and how that number continues to change. The population of the planet grows faster and faster each year. The following website will help you visualize how fast the human population is growing on Earth: <http://www.census.gov/popclock/>.

Understanding and predicting population growth or decline allows us to plan for the future. Many local decisions such as whether to build roads, or open or close school buildings are connected population changes. Similarly, many national public policy issues such as health care and the retirement age are related to population concerns.

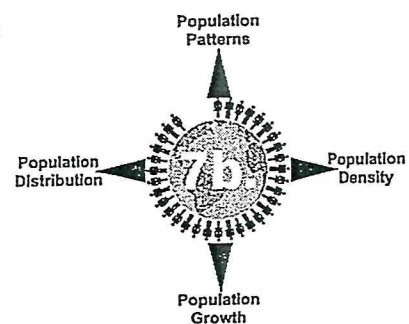


Figure 4: MC3 Project. Graphic Organizer. SS060301.