

## **Planning Implications of Population Dynamics of Suburban Areas: A Case Study of Colombo Metropolitan Area in Sri Lanka.**

Mr. U.A.Chandrasena, Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences,  
University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

### Abstract

Suburbanization is a process of changing rural landscape by converting agricultural and into urban uses and extending urban functions towards hinterlands. This process leads to some social and demographic changes that are much vital in terms of their impact on the development issues in the respective areas. Colombo as the Primate City in Sri Lanka dominates the settlement hierarchy as well as the economy in the country since the colonial time. The growth of suburban areas by de-concentrating population and functions from the capital city and the city ward migrants from rural areas is a recent phenomenon. The migrants are selective according to their age, family composition, economic conditions and also ethnicity so that the population composition structure in the area is changing spatially and temporally. Gampaha District is second largest populated administrative area in the country, which is located in the Colombo Metropolitan Region and experiences a rapid change of landscape due to urban influences and location of most of the recently established industries. Population dynamics in the district are exemplified by migration into the area, high growth rate and changing age sex composition of the population with spatial variations by DS divisions. It is also evident the nearly one third of the population in the district are born in other districts.

The study of population dynamics is needed for planning for the development of the area and improvement of the living conditions of people. Present spatial pattern of population and settlements imply the need for concerted efforts to meet the needs of growing population taking into their social, economic and demographic characteristics. The Central Government and well as local government authorities have planned and implemented different development strategies in the area. However the effects of these interventions have not been so vital compared to the emerging issues related with population dynamics.