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POPULATION

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF POPULATION

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its thirteenth session, the Statistical Commission considered population projections techniques and draft standards for national programmes and expressed its particular interest in the preparation of "demographic projections as aids to development planning and policy-making".^{1/} Since 1965, several important decisions concerning population and influencing the activities of the Secretariat in this field have been made by United Nations bodies. Section I of this paper summarizes the major resolutions and actions on population taken by the United Nations during the period under review. In section II, the main activities of the Secretariat in this field are briefly discussed, with emphasis on the research activities which are to a great extent based on demographic data. In section III, a resumé is given of the comments and recommendations made by the Population Commission at its fourteenth session concerning the two and five-year work programmes, which are of particular interest to the Statistical Commission.

I. RESOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS ON POPULATION

2. The Economic and Social Council, at its thirty-ninth session in July 1965, unanimously endorsed the recommendations of the Population Commission at its thirteenth session for an expanded programme in a fifteen-year perspective

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 13, (E/4045), para. 158.

(1965-1980), invited the regional economic commissions and the related specialized agencies to intensify their programmes, requested the Secretary-General to provide advisory services and training in action programmes in the field of population to Governments seeking assistance in this field, and to elevate population work in the United Nations Secretariat (resolution 1084 (XXXIX)). The major areas in the long-range programme include: the increase and improvement of demographic statistics, expansion of research and technical work in five priority areas (fertility, mortality and morbidity, internal migration and urbanization, demographic aspects of economic development, demographic aspects of social development), strengthening of regional demographic training and research centres to increase the supply of technically trained personnel in the developing countries, widening of the scope and increase in the amount of technical assistance in population fields available to Governments on their request, and enlarging the programme of conferences and related activities in population fields.^{2/}

3. The General Assembly discussed the problems related to population growth and economic development at its twentieth and twenty-first sessions when it adopted resolution 2211 (XXI), in which the Secretary-General was requested inter alia to pursue the implementation of the work programme covering training, research, information and advisory services in the field of population recommended by the Population Commission and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1084 (XXXIX), and to continue consultations with the specialized agencies for effective co-ordination in this field; the resolution also urged the further development and strengthening of national and regional facilities for training, research, information and advisory services in the field of population.

4. On Human Rights Day in December 1966^{3/} the Secretary-General circulated a declaration on population growth and human dignity signed by the Heads of State of twelve countries, which proclaimed as a basic right the opportunity for individuals to decide the number and spacing of their children. The Secretary-General emphasized that "population growth is not only an important factor in the rate at which nations can attain their economic goals, but that the size of the family is a

2/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 9 (E/4019), annex I, paras. 6-25.

3/ United Nations, Press Release SG/SM/620/Rev.1 (9 December 1966).

fundamental human problem which must be based on the decisions of responsible parents concerned with the dignity and well-being of their children". The leaders of eighteen countries added their signatures to the Declaration, which was presented to the Secretary-General on 11 December 1967.

5. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, at its twenty-third session, unanimously adopted resolution 74 (XXIII),^{4/} in which it endorsed General Assembly resolution 2211 (XXI), which had requested the Executive Secretary to take appropriate steps to expand the regional population programme with priority given to training, research, information and advisory services and established the Asian Population Conference as a statutory organ of the Commission to be convened every ten years starting around 1970.

6. The population question was highlighted by the Secretary-General in his opening statement to the forty-third session of the Economic and Social Council at which time he announced his decision to establish a Trust Fund for population activities, to which Governments, non-governmental organizations and foundations and private sources might make voluntary contributions to help finance the expanded programme. The Council then adopted resolution 1279 (XLIII) on "Development of activities in the field of population". The resolution noted recent advances of United Nations bodies and related specialized agencies in the field of population and urged all organizations within the United Nations system to make every effort to develop and render more effective their population programmes, including training, research, information and advisory services.

7. Resolutions and actions of the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies taken during the period under review have expanded and strengthened the population programmes of the United Nations. Of particular importance are the developments in the activities of the World Health Organization,^{5/} the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,^{6/} and the International Labour Organisation,^{7/} which have received stronger mandates to expedite activities

^{4/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 2, (E/4358).

^{5/} Official Records of the World Health Organization, 143-Annex, 18, p. 53, 151-Annex 13, p.60; World Health Assembly Document A/20/UR/12.

^{6/} Seventy-sixth Session of the UNESCO Executive Board, item 5.1 of the provisional agenda (UNESCO document 76/EX/16), p. 7.

^{7/} Resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its Forty-first Session, Geneva, 1967, pp. 5-7.

in population and allied fields. The importance of population programmes was also emphasized by other United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Children's Fund,^{8/} the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination,^{9/} the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development,^{10/} and the Commission on the Status of Women.^{11/}

II. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

8. The Population Branch of the Secretariat was upgraded to a Division in February 1966. The Population Division is responsible for the implementation of the population programme of the United Nations. It carries out its work in collaboration with competent units at the Headquarters and in the regional economic commission secretariats, and with the United Nations-sponsored demographic training and research centres. In addition to provision of services to the Population Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, the duties of the Division include preparation of demographic studies and reports; undertaking research and technical work on fertility and family planning; preparation of demographic projections; provision of advisory services to Governments in all fields of population; and reviewing and evaluating United Nations Development Programme and technical co-operation projects in these fields.

9. The Division also works in collaboration with the specialized agencies and non-governmental bodies concerned to ensure implementation of the long-range programme of work and priorities. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination has already organized three meetings on population programmes in 1965, 1966 and 1967, respectively, in which measures aiming at achieving maximum efficiency in population programmes, particularly in respect to multi-disciplinary projects, were discussed. The third meeting considered, inter alia, co-ordination of work in demographic projections, including the questions of regional distribution, time reference and exchange of computer programmes.

^{8/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 8 (E/4403), paras. 44-58.

^{9/} E/4383, paras. 60-71; E/4395, paras. 18-20.

^{10/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 14 (E/4026), paras. 75-83.

^{11/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 7 (E/4175), para. 218.

10. Analysis of demographic statistics constitutes an important part of the population programme and the Population Division is a major user of demographic data prepared and published by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat. This calls for close collaboration between the Statistical Office and the Population Division. The Division has engaged in the preparation of (a) annual United Nations estimates for various countries where official figures on total population are lacking or deficient, (b) estimates of total population for the world, major areas and regions, and (c) a brief account of the methods adopted in the preparation of annual estimates of total population. This work is undertaken for inclusion in various statistical publications of the United Nations. Since the "data bank" of international demographic statistics (see E/CN.3/380) is basic for the work of the Division, particularly for the preparation of demographic projections, the two offices have been consulting on various aspects of the establishment of the bank, including evaluation and adjustment of data.

Research studies and manuals

11. The Secretariat continued during 1965-1967 to give high priority in its work to the revision of the Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends, originally published in 1953.^{12/} This publication, which is widely used by demographers throughout the world, summarizes the findings of studies of interrelationships of demographic, economic and social factors based on a world-wide survey of scientific literature. The revised edition is expected to be issued in 1969.

12. The Secretariat undertook an exploratory study of the interrelationships of urbanization and economic and social change, with special reference to developing countries,^{13/} and continued to work on the study of rural-urban population growth 1920-1960, whose provisional findings are presented in E/CN.9/209 and in Population Division Working Paper No. 15. The over-all trends and proportions of population in localities with 500,000 and more inhabitants, 20,000 and more inhabitants, and less than 20,000 inhabitants were reconstructed as far as the diverse types of

^{12/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 53.XIII.3.

^{13/} See ST/TAO/Ser.C/97.

statistical data permitted. During 1965-1966, the Latin American Demographic Training and Research Centre (CELADE) in Santiago, Chile, undertook a series of studies of immigration into selected Latin American capital cities, and participated with ECLA and the Colegio de México in preparing a survey of internal migration in Mexico. The Demographic Training and Research Centre at Chambur, India, conducted a rural migration survey as a continuation of its studies on internal migration in India.

13. An inventory has been made by the Secretariat on recent developments in national family planning policies, with special reference to developing countries; it will be published in the next issue of the Report on the World Social Situation. An analysis of recent population trends will be published in the same issue. Analyses of national policies affecting population growth will be continued and a summary of the results will be published in due course. A study on communication and motivation pertaining to family planning has also been prepared and presented to the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development.^{14/} Among the fertility studies carried out by CELADE is a series of comparable fertility surveys in the urban and rural areas of Latin American countries. The Chambur Centre has carried out a series of research projects dealing particularly with information and communication aspects of family planning. The Centre is also engaged in a study of micro-simulation methods related to fertility and family planning programmes. The Cairo Centre has initiated surveys to determine the level of vital rates in rural areas of the United Arab Republic.

14. The study entitled World Population Prospects as Assessed in 1963^{15/} includes (a) estimates of total population by country for the period 1920-1960 and "medium" projections of this total up to 1980, (b) "medium" projections of population by age, as well as of fertility and mortality levels for the regions of the world up to the year 2000, and (c) "medium", "low", "high" and "constant fertility, no migration" projections of total population up to the year 2000, for the world and regions. Tentative projections of urban and rural population by regions up to 1980 have been prepared as a continuation of the study of rural-urban population growth 1920-1960.

^{14/} Communications for Information in Family Planning, STD/10(d).

^{15/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 66.XIII.2.

Work on estimates and projections is currently being computerized, using the facilities of the International Computing Centre of the United Nations Secretariat. Total population figures for each country by single calendar years up to 1985 have thus been prepared (Population Division Working Paper No. 13), and work is under way for preparing age-sex projections by single years of age and time for countries where such projections are lacking. The ILO, in collaboration with the Secretariat, has prepared labour force projections for regions and some countries.^{16/} Work has started in the Secretariat on studies of household and family projections.

15. Considerable attention is being paid to analytical work on evaluation and adjustment of data used in the projections. Evaluation studies of data on fertility, mortality and age-sex structure have been completed for some countries (Population Division Working Paper No. 2 (Thailand), sixteen (some French-speaking African countries) and twenty-one (Pakistan)). It is also planned to undertake evaluation studies of data used in projections of labour force, urban-rural population, and households and families in co-ordination with the specialized agencies concerned.

16. Three technical manuals were completed during the period under review. A manual dealing with methods of projecting school enrolment, prepared as a collaborative project with UNESCO, was published in 1966: Estimating Future School Enrolment in Developing Countries: A Manual of Methodology.^{17/} The manual on Methods of Estimating Basic Demographic Measures from Incomplete Data^{18/} has recently been published. It is the fourth in the series of "Manuals on methods of estimating population" prepared since 1952, intended to assist Governments in improving the quality of official population estimates. The Concept of a Stable Population: Application to the Study of Populations of Countries with Incomplete Demographic Statistics, a technical report describing the properties of certain population models and their use in making demographic estimates and analyses, is to be issued as a United Nations publication.

17. Five additional manuals are expected to be completed in 1968. These include one manual on population redistribution and internal migration and another on methods of analysing census data on economic activities of the population. The remaining

^{16/} World and Regional Estimates and Projections of Labour Force, ISLEP/A/VII.4/Add.1, 1966.

^{17/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 66.XIII.3.

^{18/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 67.XIII.2.

three manuals deal with methods of projecting: urban and rural population; the economically active population (in collaboration with the ILO); and households and families, respectively.

Demographic training

18. The Statistical Commission's attention is called to the fact that the United Nations Development Programme (Special Fund component) has provided financial support for the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) at Santiago, Chile, since 1966, and that a sub-centre of CELADE has been established in San José, Costa Rica. Discussions recently took place between the United Nations and the Government of India with a view to continuing and extending United Nations support of the Demographic Training and Research Centre at Chambur (Bombay) for the next five years; negotiations are also under way with the Government of the United Arab Republic to continue the Regional Centre for Demographic Training and Research at Cairo as a joint project of the Government and the United Nations.

19. United Nations demographic training programmes continued to aim at improving the supply of demographers in developing countries. The Cairo Centre provided fifteen United Nations fellowships for students from North Africa (other than the United Arab Republic) and the Middle East during 1965-1966 and twenty in 1966-1967. Some training in demography has also been undertaken at the statistical training centres in Addis Ababa and Dar es Salaam as a supplement to the training of statisticians. CELADE provided training for twenty-five fellows in 1965 and twenty-eight in 1966. The Chambur Centre has also provided for thirteen United Nations fellows in 1965-1966 and twelve in 1966-1967.

Technical co-operation

20. The United Nations programme of technical assistance in population to developing countries during the period 1965-1967 included, inter alia, the provision of eleven country experts in demography and family planning; the granting of approximately 140 fellowships to technicians for study at one of the three United Nations-sponsored demographic centres or at an institution outside their region; and strengthening regional advisory services in Asia and the Far East (two advisers) and the Middle East (one adviser). The number of experts teaching at the centres and

supported by United Nations or United Nations Development Programme funds reached twenty in 1967. The report of the United Nations family planning advisory mission to India,^{19/} has been issued. A five-expert family planning mission to Pakistan, a joint UN/WHO project, has started its work in January 1968.

Conferences and meetings

21. The Second World Population Conference was held in Belgrade in August-September 1965. A total of 852 participants from sixty-eight countries attended the Conference. Of the 513 papers which were prepared for the Conference, the texts of 304 and summaries of the others have been included in the Proceedings of the Conference.^{20/} Of special interest to the Statistical Commission are the papers on methods of basic demographic measures where data are lacking or defective (Meeting B.6); on demographic projections (Meetings B.4 and B.5); on new developments in measurement and analysis of factors of population growth and structure (Meeting B.7); and on promotion of demographic research and training in developing countries (Meeting B.8), which are a part of volume III of the Proceedings, while the discussions are summarized in the statements of moderators and rapporteurs in volume I. A non-technical summary of the highlights of the Conference has also been published under the title World Population: Challenge to Development,^{21/} precipitating considerable concern for and discussion of the world population situation.

22. Since the thirteenth session of the Population Commission, two programme formulation meetings which may be of interest to the Statistical Commission were convened by the Secretary-General: one on programmes in fertility, held in 1966, and the second on programmes in demographic aspects of urbanization held in 1967 (E/CN.9/203). The Statistical Office of the United Nations contributed to the documentation^{22/} and participated in both meetings. Mention should also be made of a substantive meeting, namely, the Interregional Workshop on Programmes of Training in the Field of Population, which was organized by the United Nations in co-operation with the Government of Denmark, and was convened during June 1967 (E/CN.9/207).

^{19/} Report on the Family Planning Programme in India, TAO/IND/48, 1966.

^{20/} World Population Conference, 1965, vols. I-IV, United Nations publication, Sales Nos.: 66.XIII.5, 66.XIII.6, 66.XIII.7, and 66.XIII.8.

^{21/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 66.XIII.4.

^{22/} Demographic Statistics Relevant to Fertility Studies: Current Status and Plans for Development (E/CN.9/AC.6/R.12) and Statistical Concepts and Definitions of Urban and Rural Population: National, Regional and World-Wide (E/CN.9/AC.7/L.9).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE POPULATION COMMISSION
AT ITS FOURTEENTH SESSION

23. The Population Commission held its fourteenth session at the United Nations Office in Geneva from 30 October to 10 November 1967. The following paragraphs summarize the comments and recommendations of the Commission on the topics which may be of interest to the Statistical Commission.

Promotion of improvement in demographic statistics

24. In a review of statistical developments during the period since the thirteenth session, the Population Commission expressed its satisfaction for recent developments, and particularly for prospects concerning the 1970 World Population Census Programme. It welcomed the publication of the Principles and Recommendations for the 1970 Population Censuses early enough to be of use in planning most of the national censuses scheduled for the 1970 census decade and commended the content as being in accord with the best standards of modern population census methodology.

25. The Commission welcomed the progress which had already been made in the computerization of demographic statistics, the establishment of the International Computing Centre of the United Nations Secretariat, and the potentialities this new service would have for the improvement of demographic statistics. It received with satisfaction information on the possibility of bilateral assistance to further the establishment of the data bank at an early date. Interest was also expressed in the possibility of a generalized computer programme being developed to assist Governments, especially in developing countries where trained programmers are few, in the tabulation of their 1970 population censuses.

26. The Commission was pleased to learn that a preliminary draft revision of the Principles for a Vital Statistics System: Recommendations for the Improvement and Standardization of Vital Statistics^{23/} would be presented for consideration of the Statistical Commission at its fifteenth session (E/CN.3/388). It was emphasized that sample surveys, or sample registration areas, were largely interim measures and that the establishment of civil registration systems in every country should be the long-term goal. It was also pointed out that family planning programmes required more sensitive measures of fertility and mortality than were currently

^{23/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 53.XVII.8.

available, and for this reason alone, the rough estimates obtained by other means would not be sufficient. The Commission suggested that Governments should be alerted to the pressing need to improve vital statistics so that they might play their rightful role in providing current and detailed measures of natural increase. 27. The lack of work on international migration statistics was noted, but it was agreed that development of comparability and improvement in this area was possible, if at all, only through measures taken on the national and perhaps regional level. It was noted that one or two countries with special problems had made considerable progress in developing useful national statistics to meet their own needs but even these systems are not yet entirely satisfactory. Nevertheless, recognition of the fact that such movements of population will no doubt increase in the future, and the need for these data in population estimation led to the suggestion that more attention be given to this field of statistics at the national and regional levels. At the same time, attention should also be given to developing adequate methods of measuring internal migration.

28. Demographic statistics of adequate scope and satisfactory quality, properly evaluated and analysed, are essential as a basis for sound decisions on population policy matters and planning of social and economic action. Increasing assistance to developing countries in the collection, processing and evaluation of demographic statistics should be an important part of the programme of work in the population field. Assistance should be provided on an enlarged scale for the 1970 round of population censuses, in establishing comprehensive and reliable registration systems of vital statistics, and in various kinds of demographic sampling inquiries.

29. The Commission attached the highest priority to the completion of the revision of the Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends, since it considered this work to be one of the most valuable studies of the Population Division. The urgent concern with the persistence of high fertility levels in many countries made it imperative that the Secretariat undertake, in addition to current work, an interim study of fertility levels and trends in 1968-1969; a more complete updating of the world survey of conditions and trends of fertility would have to await the results of the 1970 round of population censuses. The Commission expressed its gratitude to the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population for the "Report on Variables for Comparative Fertility Studies" prepared by its Committee on Comparative Studies of Fertility (E/CN.9/212).

30. As resources become available upon the completion of other studies, it would be timely to begin a study on infant mortality, particularly in view of the information that has recently become available from sample surveys for areas of the world for which data were previously lacking. It was suggested that consultations should be held with WHO about the most effective use of available data and application of the most recent methodological techniques that had been developed for analysing infant mortality in countries with deficient statistical data.

31. The Secretariat's interim report on the study of urban and rural population growth was considered an important contribution in an area where there were still wide gaps in knowledge; it was also felt that the study should be expanded by making greater use of national definitions of urban population. It was proposed that, in order to obtain a better understanding of the relationships between urbanization and social and economic development, the study of migration and urbanization processes and their causes and consequences should be continued, as well as the study of characteristics of migrants and the tendency to migrate. Particular attention should be given to the study of urban-rural differentials in fertility, mortality and age-structure and the study of the economic and social correlates of urbanization and migration.

32. In order to satisfy the growing demand for demographic projections among Governments, international agencies, regional bodies and various offices of the United Nations Secretariat, the Commission realized the need for the Population Division to expand and reorganize its programme of work in this field. Apart from the need for regional and world projections, developing countries in general are still in need of age-sex projections, and the more detailed types of projections are lacking for many countries.

33. Evaluation and adjustment of basic data should take an important place in the current work of the Secretariat. It was also agreed that the programme should be carried out in collaboration with the regional economic commissions and the United Nations-supported demographic training and research centres. The work of evaluation should be extended to cover all data used in preparing the different types of projections in addition to the current evaluation of age-sex structure and components of growth. Supplementary and updated evaluation studies will be necessary when the 1970 census results become available.

34. While considering the proposals for a work programme in demographic projections for the United Nations system as presented in E/CN.9/216, the Commission noted the progress of work on age-sex projections that had been achieved through use of the electronic computer facilities available at the International Computing Centre. It was found to be necessary, however, that in addition to the current work, fresh projections of population by age and sex and analysis of the results should be undertaken in 1973 on the basis of the new census data. Elaborate labour force projections could then be prepared on the basis of the 1970 census data. The need for urban-rural population projections to be made available to Governments and international bodies was also realized, but the Commission was aware that in spite of the important recent contributions there still existed considerable methodological and practical difficulties in this field. It was felt, therefore, that before preparing fresh projections the Secretariat should make an inventory of all available projections. The Commission also invited Governments to make available to the Secretariat their relevant experience.

35. It was also realized that considerable work has still to be carried out in the field of educational projections, mainly by UNESCO, in collaboration with the Population Division. Although a number of developed countries have prepared household and family projections during the last decade or so, such projections are almost entirely lacking for the developing countries, as the essential data are either unavailable or seriously defective. Because of this situation, projections of households and families should be undertaken without undue delay. It was hoped that, in this connexion, the manual on methods of projecting households and families, which is now being prepared by the Secretariat (see para. 17 above), would constitute an inventory of present knowledge and experience in this field.

36. In view of the growing need of Governments for population projections of various kinds, work on the manuals on methods of projecting the economically active population, urban and rural population, and households and families should be completed within a short time. Interest was also expressed in the early completion of the work on the two manuals dealing with analysing census data in developing countries, namely, the manuals on "Population redistribution and internal migration" and "Methods of analysing census data on economic activities".

37. The Commission supported the proposal to prepare and publish biennially an up-to-date assessment of population trends for the information of the Economic and

Social Council and the General Assembly. It was considered that such a report should aim at presenting the most up-to-date picture possible of population growth, fertility levels and trends, mortality levels and trends, including infant mortality, changes in age structure, urban and rural distribution, educational levels, economically active population, and future population prospects for the world and its main regions.

Demographic training

38. As a general principle, it was believed that the United Nations-sponsored centres should supplement and complement training offered by universities or other national training bodies in developing regions. The opinion was also expressed that while CELADE was satisfactorily meeting the needs of the Latin American region, the Centres at Chembur and Cairo required expansion and strengthening, and that additional training facilities should be established to meet the needs of Africa south of the Sahara. Regarding the type of training offered by the Centres, it was noted that there had been a tendency toward broadening the curricula to include, in addition to technical and substantive demography, other subjects closely related to development problems and population policies.

Technical co-operation

39. While reviewing technical assistance in population matters, the Commission attached great importance to the identification of specific country needs, which are not the same in all developing regions. Attention was called to the following fields in which assistance can be offered to interested Governments: demographic statistics, demographic analysis, formulation of national population programmes within the framework of economic and social policy, advisory services in various aspects of family planning activities, training of demographic personnel, and the preparation of various kinds of population projections. It was also recommended that the corps of regional demographic advisers should be increased to cover regions for which there are no advisers at present, namely, Africa and Latin America.