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PROGRESS REPORTS

UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL OFFICE

Report of the Secretary-General

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1. This report covers the work of the United Nations Statistical Office since the sixteenth (October 1970) session of the Commission. It presents background information for the use of the Commission; no action is expected of the Commission. The following documents before the Commission at its seventeenth session contain supplementary information on the work of the Office: E/CN.3/422 (electronic data processing and data banks), E/CN.3/423 (statistical requirements of the Second United Nations Development Decade), E/CN.3/424 and E/5099 (technical assistance), E/CN.3/425 (system of statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation), E/CN.3/427 (system of price and quantity statistics), E/CN.3/428 (collection and compilation of price and quantity statistics), E/CN.3/429 (Standard International Trade Classification, Rev. 2), E/CN.3/430 (statistics of the distributive trades and services), E/CN.3/432 (system of demographic and social statistics), E/CN.3/434 (international migration statistics), E/CN.3/435 (internal migration statistics), E/CN.3/439 (publications of statistics).

I. DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS AND CO-ORDINATION SECTION

A. Co-ordinated and integrated statistical programmes

2. The major portion of the work of the section involves the promotion of a co-ordinated and integrated statistical programme for the United Nations system in order to contribute to the efficiency of national statistical systems in both developing and developed countries and to ensure the effective use of resources at the international level, particularly in the context of the policy measures and objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade. Over one third of the section's resources were devoted to these programmes, including the preparation of documentation for and servicing the sessions of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination's Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities and the Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination. "International statistical programmes, 1973-1977" (E/CN.3/421) is before the Commission. Work continued, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, on the Directory of International Statistics, including the preparation of a comprehensive list of international statistical series.

3. Work began on an integrated four- or five-year scheme of technical assistance in statistics provided by the United Nations system, as proposed in "Technical assistance programmes of the United Nations system" (E/5099, para. 19), which is before the Commission with E/CN.3/424.

B. Co-ordinated and integrated data banks of economic and social statistics

4. Work has been done to promote co-ordinated and integrated data banks of economic and social statistics in order to improve the interchange and joint use of these types of data and to eliminate deficiencies and the duplication of effort. The Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination felt that a detailed inventory of information on these data banks with respect to concepts, classifications and definitions "would be of

considerable value to the Statistical Commission in the work on co-ordination of the statistical activities of the United Nations family" (E/CN.3/419, para 21). Furthermore, it would provide information on available data to potential users of stored data. To meet these and other goals, a questionnaire on data bases of economic and social statistics was prepared and work on the inventory of international data banks began during the period under review. Document E/CN.3/422, entitled "Electronic data processing and data banks", is before the Commission.

C. Statistical programmes for monitoring, appraising and diagnosing economic and social progress during the Second United Nations Development Decade

5. The General Assembly, in resolution 2626 (XXV), para. (79), indicated that "Appropriate arrangements are necessary to keep under systematic scrutiny the progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Decade - to identify shortfalls in their achievement and the factors which account for them". A new concerted programme in statistics (Development Statistics Project) was instituted involving the compilation and publication, in 1973, of the relevant series of data within a framework designed to meet the statistical requirements of the Decade. The report entitled "Required statistics and methods and priorities of collection" (E/CN.3/423) is before the Commission.

6. Existing gaps in international statistical standards and guidelines will be identified and countries will be assisted in collecting, compiling and reporting internationally comparable data on as current a basis as feasible through seminars, workshops and regional and interregional advisers. A proposal for holding an interregional seminar on statistical organization in co-operation with interested specialized agencies and with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme, as requested by the Commission at its sixteenth session, is currently being circulated among several developing countries. The seminar, proposed for 1973, would bring together the chief statisticians of the developing nations in order to apprise them of the statistical requirements of the Second United Nations Development Decade and assist them in strengthening their statistical services to meet the new requirements of the 1970s.

D. International Comparison Project (ICP)

7. This project of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, carried out in co-operation with the University of Pennsylvania, is intended to develop and apply methods for the international comparison of national product, income and expenditure aggregates and the purchasing power of currencies in order to produce comparable valuations for such aggregates. The International Comparison Project continued during the period under review, and the methodology developed during the first years of the comparison have been applied in order to arrive at purchasing power equivalents for 10 selected currencies. Additional countries have agreed to participate in the next round of comparisons.

II. NATIONAL ACCOUNTS, FINANCE AND PRICES BRANCH

A. The System of National Accounts (SNA)

8. Since the Commission's sixteenth session, considerable attention has been devoted to promoting and assisting in the introduction of the revised SNA in the national accounting of countries with market economies. Technical assistance experts in national accounting - regional advisers in Africa, Asia and Latin America and experts stationed in selected African and Latin American countries - have concentrated on helping countries, on request, to use the system as a basis for their national accounting and for improving their basic economic statistics. For the same purposes, training courses have been held in Africa and Central America and working groups have been convened in Africa and Asia. These working groups are part of a series of annual meetings which are to go through the SNA systematically. A similar series of annual meetings are proposed for Latin America. For Africa and Asia, the annual working groups may be interrupted for lack of funds. Meetings will probably not be convened during 1972. African, Asian and Latin American statisticians and economists have also met to discuss the ways in which the revised SNA might be used in planning, assessing and analysing economic and social development.

9. The technical papers prepared for the aforementioned meetings were largely drawn from drafts of manuals on the SNA as a whole and on the public sector in the SNA. These handbooks, as well as a technical manual on input-output tables and analyses, are near completion.

10. The number of market-economy countries which use the revised SNA has increased steadily during the last two years. Sixteen countries - six of them developing - used the new system in reporting data in the 1971 National Accounts Questionnaire. Since additional countries have been engaged in introducing the revised SNA, a greater amount of reporting based on it is expected from the 1972 questionnaire.

11. In order to simplify the international reporting of national accounting data, the Statistical Office of the United Nations and the Economic Statistics and National Accounts Division of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have striven to use identical questionnaires. This goal has been attained in the joint 1972 National Accounts Questionnaire tables and instructions.

12. Work has been carried forward during the last two years on the definitions and classifications of the balance-sheet and revaluation accounts of the revised SNA and the connected standard accounts and tables.

B. The System of Material Product Balances (MPS)
and links between MPS and SNA

13. The study entitled Basic Principles of the System of Balances of the National Economy^{1/} was published in English, French, Russian and Spanish and circulated to all national statistical offices and interested international agencies. The work on a technical publication concerning the conceptual relationships and links between MPS and SNA is almost completed. This publication includes examples of the conversion of data from one system to the other. The shift from SNA to MPS is illustrated for Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The conversion of MPS data to SNA data is shown for Hungary and Yugoslavia. The extensive co-operation of these countries in furnishing special tabulations of data made possible the preparation of the illustrations.

C. Statistics of the distribution of income,
consumption and accumulation

14. The final text of the draft international guidelines for a system of statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation that is complementary to the national accounts and balances was prepared (E/CN.3/425). It was based on comments gathered on the earlier text of the proposed system (E/CN.3/400) and on further research into national practices. Document E/CN.3/425 has been considered by a working party of the Conference of European Statisticians and by the Expert Group on Statistics of the Distribution of Income, Consumption and Accumulation at its second session. The discussions and conclusions of the latter meeting are set out in E/CN.3/426. Documents E/CN.3/425 and E/CN.3/426 are before the Commission; it is hoped that the Commission will be in a position to adopt international guidelines for income distribution and related statistics.

15. In addition to E/CN.3/425, the work that the Commission at its sixteenth session requested on the comparative study of national practices in statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation has been carried forward. The manuscript of this study is almost finished.

D. Statistics of prices and quantities

16. "A system of price and quantity statistics" (E/CN.3/427) and "The collection and compilation of price and quantity statistics" (E/CN.3/428), which are before the Commission, were prepared in the light of comments gathered on the preceding texts of these documents and of further research into national practices. The Commission at its sixteenth session and meetings in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe discussed the preceding versions. A study of national practices concerns the concepts, definitions and classifications, sources of data, and methods of collection and compilation used by countries in series of traditional index numbers of prices and quantities and in constant-price national accounting. The results of the study are now being organized into analytical tables.

E. A system of demographic and social statistics

17. Two documents on a system of demographic and social statistics - ST/STAT.49 and E/CN.3/432 (the latter is before the Commission) - were issued during the last two years, and the first extensive round of consultations with national statistical authorities was completed. During the consultations, ST/STAT.49 was the subject of discussion at meetings in Africa, Asia and Europe and of detailed written comments from national statistical offices throughout the world and from interested international bodies. In accordance with the request of the Commission at its sixteenth session, the document deals with the concepts, scope, basic series and classifications, and social indicators of a system of demographic and social statistics. Document E/CN.3/432, which concerns the framework, accounts and techniques of analysis of the system, in addition to the aspects covered in ST/STAT.49, was prepared in the light of the comments gathered on the latter paper and on E/CN.3/394 which was also the subject of discussion during the last two years. E/CN.3/394 had covered about the same ground as does E/CN.3/432 and had been considered by the Commission at its sixteenth session and by working groups in Africa, Asia and Europe.

18. As the Commission requested at its sixteenth session, work was undertaken, with the assistance of an expert, on the character, concepts and content of a system of demographic and social statistics appropriate to the circumstances and problems of the developing countries. It has not yet reached the stage where a paper can be issued.

F. Classification of all goods and services

19. Since the Commission's sixteenth session, comments have been gathered on the "Draft International Standard Commodity Classification of All Goods and Services" (ST/STAT.47). This paper was considered at meetings in Asia and Europe and commented on in detail by national statistical offices throughout the world and by interested international organizations. A second draft of the classification is being prepared in the light of those comments. The proposed classification is based on the principle of classifying goods and services according to the industrial classification of the establishments in which they are characteristically produced.

20. A revised text of the Classification of Commodities by Industrial Origin^{2/} was issued in 1971. This publication sets out the links between the groups (four-digit classes) of the latest text of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities^{3/} and the subgroups and items (four- and five-digit categories) of the Standard International Trade Classification, Revised.^{4/}

- ^{2/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.XVII.15.
^{3/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XVII.8
^{4/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 61.XVII.6.

III. SPECIAL PROJECTS SECTION

A. National accounts data

21. National accounts data have been collected from approximately 140 countries through questionnaires and other sources. These were processed on the computer at the United Nations and stored on magnetic tape. This tape has increasingly become the main source of basic national accounts data for anyone interested in undertaking analyses for a large number of countries, for which such data are available. A number of units of the United Nations, some specialized agencies and other international organizations have depended heavily on the data contained in this tape.

22. The Statistical Office continued its publication programme in the field of national accounts. The Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, 1970, in press, will be the first issue containing data according to the revised System of National Accounts (SNA). It shows data for about 140 countries. In volume I, country estimates are shown in terms of both the former SNA and the present SNA, generally for the years 1960-1969 (former SNA) and 1968-1969 (present SNA). In volume II, the formats of two tables, (1) the finance of gross accumulation and (2) saving as percentage of disposable income and by percentage distribution by sector, have been shown to accord with the present SNA. Also, the countries with centrally planned economies received a Material Balances Questionnaire for the first time; this questionnaire requests more items of data than provided heretofore by this group of countries. Since both the SNA questionnaire and MPS questionnaire request many more tables than did the former questionnaire, the 1970 edition of the Yearbook shows an increase of 338 pages over the 1969 edition.

23. These changes in the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics have also been introduced in the other Statistical Office publications which carry national accounts tables, namely, the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, the Statistical Yearbook and the forthcoming Yearbook of Housing Statistics as well as in the ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics.

24. The Office continued to publish the public finance chapter in the Statistical Yearbook. It covered 75 countries in the 1970 edition and 86 in the 1971 edition.

25. Further work on national accounts data involved the development of interpolation models and the programming of them on the computer for estimating missing national accounts series. Approximately 6,000 printouts resulting from these series were prepared, containing manipulations of national accounts data such as growth rates, ratios, implicit price deflators and other related computations. These are unpublished data, primarily intended to serve the various users of national accounts data such as the various units of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other international organizations.

26. With the growing tendency among the units of the United Nations and other international agencies to use statistics as a basis for administrative and other decisions, the Statistical Office has provided substantive statistical servicing for the General Assembly, the Office of the Secretary-General, the Committee on Contributions, the Office of the Controller, the Office of Personnel, the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and a number of specialized agencies. For example, for the work of the Committee on Contributions, the Statistical Office in 1971 and 1972 provided for each Member State national accounts data, population estimates, exchange rates, prices and data on the servicing and amortization of the external debt. Examples of other tasks performed by the Office since October 1970 include: (a) the preparation of a "Study of the nature of the increase in the level of expenditure in the United Nations regular budget" (A/C.5/1307), a document submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session, and (b) the preparation of statistical material on gross domestic product, capital formation, military expenditure, and expenditure on education and health and on persons in the armed forces, for inclusion in the report of the Group of Consultant Experts on the Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race and Military Expenditures (A/3469/Rev.1).

B. Sampling

27. Two publications were issued since the last session of the Commission.

28. The first, A Short Manual on Sampling, Vol. I, Elements of Sample Survey Theory, 5/ is a revision of the first edition, published in 1961. This revision took into account a number of the important advances in the field of sampling, particularly for economic and social surveys. Ten new sampling processes were added to the 22 included in the first edition. The 10 new processes relate to sampling for proportion and percentage, sample size estimation, estimation of gain due to stratification, ratio and regression estimation procedures in stratified random sampling, estimation of proportion in cluster sampling, unequal probability without replacement in multistage sampling, systematic sampling, ratio estimation in multiphase sampling and the optimum sampling fraction among non-respondents in mail inquiries. Although some of the additional material was previously known to sampling experts, it was added with a view to enhancing the usefulness of the Manual to national statistical offices, training institutes and universities.

29. The second, A Short Manual on Sampling, Vol. II, Computer Programmes for Sample Designs, 6/ was written to facilitate the application of the sampling techniques in volume I to the processing of large amounts of data. The publication contains a set of FORTRAN IV computer programmes for each of the processes described in part II of volume I. This will enable those who have not had such previous experience in computer programming to process data collected from sample inquiries more efficiently.

IV. INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS SECTION

A. The 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics

30. Parts I and II of the final recommendations for the programme in English, French and Spanish, 7/ were published during the period under review and distributed to countries. Part III, Organization and Conduct of Industrial Censuses, was completed with the help of consultants, according to the Commission's recommendations, and is now in press. The most salient addition to the previous draft of part III is the inclusion of an annex on practical sampling techniques in industrial censuses.

31. A Working Group on the 1973 Basic Industrial Statistics, organized by ECAFE and the Statistical Office, was held at Bangkok in November 1971.

B. The Growth of World Industry

32. During 1971, the 1969 edition was published. 8/ Volume I included general data up to 1968 on the industrial production of 71 countries, and volume II contained commodity detail up to 1969 on a maximum of 327 industrial commodities for more than 160 countries.

33. Volumes I and II of the 1970 edition were also issued. Volume I included general data up to 1969 on the industrial production of 82 countries, and volume II contained commodity detail up to 1970 on a maximum of 350 industrial commodities for more than 173 countries.

34. Work on the preparation of a data bank (1963-1970) for countries included in volume I was initiated as a first step in the computerization of future editions of The Growth of World Industry. Towards the end of 1972, countries will be requested to examine and correct the estimates.

C. Construction statistics

35. A questionnaire on construction statistics was sent to countries in May 1972 in respect of the years 1963-1971. This first questionnaire is experimental and was designed in the light of the international requirements for annual construction statistics and the results of an inquiry carried out during the second half of 1971 concerning the data available nationally.

7/ Recommendations for the 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics: Part I, General Industrial Objectives, (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.XVII.13); Part II, List of Selected Products and Materials, (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.XVII.16)

8/ The Growth of World Industry, 1969 Edition, Vol.I. General Industrial Statistics, (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E/F.71.XVII.6); Vol.II. Commodity Production Data, (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.XVII.7.)

36. A new annual publication on construction statistics is planned, with the first issue to be released in 1973.

D. Distributive-trades and services statistics

37. At the request of the Commission, a draft revised version of international recommendations on statistics of the distributive trades and services was prepared and is before the Commission (E/CN.3/430). In order to up-date the study on national practices, countries had been requested to revise their entries in annex B of E/CN.3/407. On the basis of some 50 replies received, an up-to-date version of the annex was used as background information in the preparation of the international recommendations.

V. INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS CENTRE

A. Commodity Trade Statistics

38. With the establishment of the International Computing Centre at Geneva in 1971, on which the Statistical Office is to rely for the processing of the bulk of the data, a unit of eleven persons (consisting of three professional statisticians transferred from Headquarters and eight locally recruited General Service personnel) was installed in Geneva to process Commodity Trade Statistics. Because of the need to convert a large number of computer programmes originally written for the IBM 7044 computer into new programmes suitable for the IBM 360 in Geneva and to train newly recruited personnel, the routine output of mechanically processed data was substantially delayed for many months, especially during late 1971 and the beginning of 1972. The unit, however, is now in full operation and the normal schedule of production has been resumed. The output is expected to increase significantly as the staff, reinforced with a much larger computer, becomes more proficient.

B. World trade matrices showing trade flows by country for about 200 commodities

39. While the data available in long-time series, compiled by the Centre showing trade flows between economic regions for large commodity classes are generally regarded as basic for general economic analysis, they are insufficient in detail for meaningful evaluation, for instance, of the economic performance of the developing countries during the Second United Nations Development Decade. On the other hand, the detailed statistics, regularly reported to the Centre each year via magnetic tapes or punched cards by 60 to 70 countries, do not provide adequate coverage for building up a comprehensive network of trade flows for most of the important commodities because the majority of developing countries, as well as the countries with centrally planned economies, either have not been able to send, or have sent with excessively long delays, their data suitable for immediate machine processing. Therefore, with the aim of furnishing the basic statistical information that will facilitate, among other uses, the review of trade performance of the developing countries during the Decade, the Centre has

been making a serious effort, during the period under review, to compile a set of world trade matrices showing trade flows between any pair of countries, one for each important commodity or commodity group. This involves, for each country not reporting or reporting late to the office via tapes or cards, the extraction from published sources, and/or compilation through research, of the data indicating the direction of trade flows for each of the 177 Standard International Trade Classification groups and a few important less aggregated commodity headings. The data thus extracted or compiled will constitute inputs to the computer operation which, together with the information reported regularly by individual countries, will produce a set of comprehensive trade matrices for about 200 commodity headings. It is planned that the data in the form of such matrices for 1962-1970 will be published towards the end of 1972.

C. Computerization

40. The compilation of the Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, which now covers annual data for 142 countries, has entailed massive hand extraction of national statistics during the past two decades. As the work of computerizing the Yearbook is closely related to, or in fact may be considered a part of, the compilation of the world trade matrices described in para. 39 above, much progress has been made during recent months. The 1970 Yearbook, which is to appear in 1972, will be primarily computer produced.

D. Price Movements of Basic Commodities in International Trade; 1950-1970^{9/}

41. This publication was issued in 1972. It gives 31 annual price series in index form, as well as quarterly data beginning 1954, which will be invaluable information for serious students of prices, especially in studies concerning seasonality.

E. General revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)

42. Following the review by the Commission at its sixteenth session of the progress of work, the Centre made studies in depth on certain areas of the SITC. At the end of 1971, a draft revision of the SITC was completed and circulated to governments for comments. The second session of the Expert Group on the Second General Revision was convened (Headquarters, 5-9 June 1972) to consider the draft revision together with the countries' comments. Document E/CN.3/429, which is before the Commission and contains the proposed draft SITC, Rev. 2, is the result of the deliberations by the Expert Group.

F. External trade statistics analysed by mode of transport

43. The Commission at its sixteenth session recommended that the study of trade statistics by mode of transport should be continued and the possibility should be explored for the general collection and processing of these statistics. Following this recommendation, the Centre took the following steps:

44. In order to meet the pressing needs of the ocean transport industry, the Centre undertook a project of constructing a comprehensive analysis of trade flows by volume on individual sea lanes of the world for each of about 35 commodity groups under the headings of bulk dry, bulk liquid, general cargo etc. While a few countries have been able to supply data for their trade carried by sea, this project had to rely mainly on the existing regular trade statistics reported by governments via tapes or cards. An elaborate system of adjustments by computer had to be devised in order to make the regular statistics more suitable for ocean transport purposes. It is planned that, by the end of 1972, the network of trade flows on world sea lanes in the form of matrices for the period 1966-1968 will be completed. A similar network for 1969-1971 will be prepared in 1973.

45. To investigate the possibility of the general collection of international trade statistics by mode of transport, the Centre sent letters to countries in June 1971 asking governments whether they would be in a position to furnish annual data basically at the three-digit SITC group level. The responses have been very favourable. Counting the countries which indicated an ability to produce data of this type and those which are known to be in a position to furnish such data, there will be 46 countries that may be expected to send information by mode of transport beginning with the year 1973 or 1974. This represents a very promising situation because the trade of these countries covers, in terms of the physical volume of commodity trade in the case of ocean transport, for instance, over 90 per cent of the global movements of merchandise carried by sea. In view of these favourable circumstances, it appears desirable to begin the general collection of international trade statistics by mode of transport during 1974 for processing and publication by the Centre.

VI. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS BRANCH

46. Heretofore, a summary of housing data had been published annually in the Statistical Yearbook. Beginning in 1972, a Yearbook of Housing Statistics will be a regular publication of the Office; the first (1971) issue is now in preparation and will contain much more detailed data than previously included in the Statistical Yearbook.

47. The computerization of demographic data has proceeded through the data for 1971.

48. The Office has continued to encourage countries to take at least one national population and one national housing census during each census decade. The

success of this effort in relation to the 1970 census decade cannot be measured completely until the end of the decade, in 1974, but if countries are able to achieve their stated intentions, the 1970 round of censuses will cover more countries and a greater proportion of the world's population than ever before. It is anticipated that some 2,725 million persons, about 75 per cent of the world's total, will have been enumerated by the end of 1974, in contrast with the 2,179 million, constituting some 68 per cent of the world's total, enumerated during the 1960 round of censuses.

49. Part VI, Sampling in Connexion with Population and Housing Censuses,^{10/} of the Handbook of Population and Housing Census Methods was issued in 1971. Part IV, Survey of Population and Housing Census Experience, 1955-1964, and Part V, Methods of Evaluating Population and Housing Census Results, will be completed in 1972. Part III, Topics and Tabulations for Housing Censuses,^{11/} had been issued in 1970. There will be seven parts in all in the Handbook.

50. The Office has continued to encourage the establishment or improvement of systems for the collection of vital statistics. The final text of the Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, (E/CN.3/411 and annex), approved by the Commission at its sixteenth session, will be ready for reproduction by about August 1972.

51. Recommendations for the improvement of international migration statistics and of internal migration statistics were drafted; these are before the Commission in E/CN.3/434 and E/CN.3/435.

52. The staff has continued to give lectures at the training courses on census methodology regularly given to overseas fellows by the United States Bureau of the Census.

53. The provision of substantive support for technical co-operation in the field of population and housing censuses has greatly increased since the Commission's sixteenth session, so much so, in fact, that other activities have had to be postponed to permit staff to work on this. Census programmes in both Africa and Latin America, financed by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), have received particular emphasis. One professional officer was added to the staff in March 1972 in support of these activities. Plans are under way for similar activities in the Middle East and in Asia and the Far East.

^{10/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.XVII.9.

^{11/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.XVII.6.

VII. COST OF LIVING SECTION

54. The Statistical Office has continued to provide substantive statistical servicing for the interagency Expert Committee on Post Adjustment, established by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination for the purpose of preserving equivalent standards of living at the various duty stations where international civil servants are assigned.

55. Place-to-place studies were carried out in approximately 25 of the duty stations each year; these studies involve collecting price and family expenditure data, establishing weighting or consumption patterns and computing the post-adjustment indices. Where no suitable local consumer price indices were available - for about 75 cities - time-to-time comparisons were made in order to up-date the place-to-place results based on current price data. For those cities with suitable local indices, these were used in conjunction with the appropriate United Nations weighting pattern for each city.

56. In 1971, a revised version of the publication Retail Price Comparisons for International Salary Determination ^{12/} was issued, based on studies carried out by the Statistical Branch of the International Labour Organisation for cities in Europe and by the Statistical Office of the United Nations for cities elsewhere in the world. It includes data on the basic survey (New York City) and on surveys carried out in 76 other cities where United Nations offices are located. The publication sets forth information on the methods used in the calculations, as well as some of the retail price data upon which the comparisons are based.

^{12/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.XVII.9.