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PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES: IMPLEMENTATION AND PROSPECTS

REGIONAL CONFERENCES OF STATISTICIANS AND SIMILAR BODIES*

Report by the Secretary-General

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* The Secretary-General wishes to thank the Inter-American Statistical Institute for its contribution to this report.

1. This progress report covers the statistical activities of the regional economic commissions and of the Inter-American Statistical Institute since the seventeenth session of the Statistical Commission, in November 1972. A progress report on the work of the Statistical Office of the United Nations is also before the Commission (E/CN.3/465), as is one on the statistical work of the specialized agencies (E/CN.3/467).

I. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (ECE)

A. Conference of European Statisticians

2. The Conference held its twenty-first plenary session in June 1973 (ECE/CES/2) and the twenty-second plenary session is scheduled for June 1974. The main developments in the Conference's work during the programme years 1972/73 and 1973/74 are described below.

1. Economic statistics

3. The Conference continued to co-operate in the work of the Statistical Commission on the extension and further development of the systems of national accounts and balances. Meetings were held on statistics of prices and quantities and on balance-sheets and reconciliation accounts. Work continued on an international comparison of relative income differences within the population, which is being carried out jointly by eight countries. The Conference also started work on a study of the most effective means of using the national accounts and balances for the co-ordination of economic statistics.

4. The Conference is participating in the work on the development of an International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services (ICGS). A second meeting on the subject is planned for 1974/75. Relevant parts of the classification will also be studied in other meetings convened by the Conference, in which experts in the fields concerned participate.

5. Work continued on the preparation of a conversion key between the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and the Standard Foreign Trade Classification (SFTC) of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). It is planned to circulate a revised version of the draft key during the second half of 1974.

6. The Conference has continued to co-operate with FAO and the ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems in the field of agricultural statistics. Meetings were held to discuss an integrated programme of agricultural statistics and a revised version of the handbook for economic accounts for agriculture.

7. The Conference is working jointly with UNESCO and the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Science and Technology on the improvement and development of statistics of science and technology. A second meeting was held in December 1972 and preparatory work for a third meeting is in progress.

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8. A trilingual list of standard terms used in productivity statistics was published in 1973.

2. Social and demographic statistics

9. The Conference continued to participate in the development of a System of Social and Demographic Statistics (SSDS). The working party on the subject met in June 1974 to discuss draft international guidelines for social indicators. Work is also in progress on the preparation of a paper on the common definitions and classifications of the system and on other selected aspects of the systems for consideration at the session of the working party in 1974/75.

10. In 1972/73 a consultation on health statistics was held jointly with WHO, at which questions relating to the health subsystem of SSDS were discussed. In 1973/74 meetings were held on (a) migration statistics, to discuss revised standards for statistics of international migration and draft guidelines for statistics of internal migration; and (b) fertility surveys, to discuss the scope and contents of the surveys to be carried out by ECE countries as part of the World Fertility Survey. Preparations have also been completed for a meeting on cultural statistics to be held jointly with UNESCO in September 1974.

3. Statistics for environmental studies and policies

11. A seminar on environmental statistics was held in Warsaw in October 1973 jointly with the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental Problems. The main topics discussed were a system of environmental statistics and related questions, statistics needed for the study of environmental phenomena in selected fields and statistics relevant to environmental studies and policies that can be obtained from enterprises. The seminar proposed that priority be given during the next stage of the work to the specific types of data required and to the concepts, definitions and classifications needed, notably for studying activities causing pollution and disturbances. The Conference will consider the programme of work proposed at the seminar at its June 1974 session and will select the specific topics to be studied during the next stage of the work.

4. Organizational and operational subjects

12. The Working Party on Electronic Data Processing met under the 1972/73 and 1973/74 programmes. The main subjects discussed were the integrated statistical information system, structure and organization of data base systems, generalized computer programmes in use for statistical data processing, programme portability, data entry systems and automatic detection and adjustment of errors in statistical data.

5. Co-ordination of statistical activities

13. The Conference convened a consultation with international organizations on co-ordination of work on social indicators in conjunction with its twentieth

plenary session (1972) and a consultation on co-ordination of work on classifications of goods and services in conjunction with its twenty-first plenary session (1973). The Conference continues to review the statistical work of ECE at its annual plenary sessions.

B. Statistical work of the principal subsidiary bodies of ECE

14. The Group of Experts on Transport Statistics of the Inland Transport Committee of ECE met in September 1973. The main subjects discussed were indices of prices and quantities in transport, sample surveys of goods and passenger transport, container transport statistics, road traffic censuses and methods of regularly obtaining comprehensive statistics of goods transport by road.

15. The joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest and Forest Products Statistics of the Timber Committee of ECE and the European Forestry Commission of FAO met in May 1973. The Working Party considered, *inter alia*, the quantification and evaluation of environmental benefits of the forest, classification and definitions of forest products, conversion factors, removal statistics, forest inventory statistics, labour statistics, cost and price statistics, statistics of consumption, end uses and deliveries, economic indicators and the methodology of wood balances.

16. The Group of Experts on Coal Statistics of the Coal Committee of ECE met in June 1973. The main subjects discussed were capital formation and cost of production in the European coal industries, internationally comparable measurements of productivity, statistical methods of measuring the influence of temperature on coal consumption, productivity forecasts and statistical methods of recording and analysing working time at mechanized coal faces.

17. The Group of Experts on Gas Statistics of the Committee on Gas of ECE met in September 1973. The main subjects discussed were questions arising from the gradual transition to the international system of units, collection of statistical information on underground gas storage facilities and statistics of natural gas reserves.

18. All other statistical meetings under the programmes of the principal subsidiary bodies of ECE were convened jointly with the Conference of European Statisticians and have already been mentioned under A above.

II. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST (ECAFE)

A. Statistical collection, compilation and analysis

19. In 1972 the Statistics Division began a project for the collection of census data or demographic surveys of countries of the ECAFE region. Those countries which took part in the 1970 World Programme of Population Censuses were asked to provide a copy of a one-in-a-hundred sample file of households, on magnetic tape,

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for research purposes. The tape library thus being built up so far comprises six data sets covering five countries of the region. Extension of this to cover the other countries is envisaged over the next few years. Some of the cost of the work (for the editing of the country tapes, establishment of benchmark values, and documentation of the records with a copy of the questionnaire and a listing of the main codes used) is being supported by the United States Bureau of the Census.

20. During the period under review, the fourth and fifth issues of the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East were published. The fourth issue (1971) included, for the first time, the available data relating to the British Solomon Islands, Nauru and Tonga, and the fifth issue the available data relating to Bhutan and the Cook Islands. The sixth issue (1973) is in press.

21. The Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics for Asia and the Far East, which was established as a publication after separation from the Quarterly Economic Bulletin for Asia and the Far East, continued to be published during 1972 and subsequently. In addition to the statistical tables, the issues of the Bulletin contain leading articles such as on the role of censuses, surveys and administrative records in social statistics (December 1971); planning, preparing and organizing an industrial census (March 1972); statistics for sectoral planning (June 1972); the state of statistics in the countries of the ECAFE region (September 1972); review of the national accounts and input-output tables of the Republic of Korea (December 1972 and March 1973).

22. The new quarterly publication Statistical Indicators in ECAFE Countries, which was started in 1971, continued to be issued. The coverage and content of the publication have been enlarged.

23. Foreign Trade Statistics for Asia and the Far East issues for 1967, 1968 and 1969 were published. Steps have been taken to issue the publication in various sections, as data from countries are reported.

24. A supplement to the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East, containing a description of the series shown in the Yearbook, is being prepared for publication during 1974.

B. Statistical methods and standards

25. The ninth and tenth Report on Sample Surveys in the ECAFE Region have been issued. The tenth report, covering the year 1972, includes particulars relating to 58 sample surveys conducted in 20 reporting countries as well as a list of 113 repetitive surveys in respect of which the details remain the same. The Guidelines for Statistics on Children and Youth (Provisional), approved by the Conference of Asian Statisticians at its tenth session (1970) was published. Evaluative methodological studies on national accounts and input-output tables were undertaken for selected countries of the region; these are being published in the Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics. A pilot study on commodity balances was undertaken for

Singapore and the results of this study are being extended to selected countries of the region. This extended study will be undertaken as a joint project of ECAFE, FAO, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Institute for Developing Economies (IDE), Tokyo. ADB has provided US\$50,000 for this study.

C. Statistics development

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26. During the period under review, the eleventh and twelfth sessions of the Conference of Asian Statisticians were held, the former at Manila, Philippines, in July 1972 and the latter at New Delhi, India in December 1973. The Conference at its eleventh session reviewed the statistics development activities and programmes of the countries of the region, considered the reports of the sixth Working Group of Experts on National Accounts, the Working Group on 1973 Basic Industrial Inquiries and the Working Group on Social Statistics and broadly endorsed their recommendations. It also approved a programme of basic industrial inquiries for Asia and the Far East and a list of indicators of social development. The Conference also reviewed the multi-subject sample survey systems and recommended a thorough study of their advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis uni-subject surveys. The Conference discussed surveys on family planning and supported the proposal for a World Fertility Survey. It also recommended that countries establish national co-ordinating units for statistics on adult education. Among the other recommendations of the Conference were a seminar on information systems, exchange of information on seasonal adjustment procedures and extension of studies on commodity balances.

27. The Conference at its twelfth session reviewed the statistics development activities and programmes in the countries of the region, considered the reports of the Joint Meeting of Planners and Statisticians and the Working Group on Statistics of the Distribution of Income, Consumption and Accumulation and agreed that it was necessary to develop and strengthen basic statistics. That could be done in a systematic way, using national accounts and other systems as a general framework. Recognizing that statistical systems should be designed to meet the needs of development planning in all its phases, including progress reporting, review and evaluation of plans, the Conference recommended that those requirements be given particular attention in the revision of the manual "Basic Statistics for Planning and Development in the countries of the ECAFE region". The Conference reviewed the data bases for statistical systems and felt that the design of data bases raised many questions which might be dealt with through a regional meeting, supported by outside expertise. The Conference reviewed the developments in the field of multisubject surveys and the experience of countries in the ECAFE region and identified the conditions favourable to the adoption of multisubject survey systems and those favourable to uni-subject surveys. It also drew attention to the pitfalls sometimes encountered in planning and conducting multisubject surveys without the necessary background and experience.

28. The Conference considered the indicators of social development and recommended that the list of indicators should be regarded as an interim list, designed to meet the immediate needs of the region for early indications on critical issues, and

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that it should be reviewed after a few years. It also considered the measurement of employment, unemployment and underemployment, the problems of implementing the international recommendations on civil registration, trends in education projections, and mortality statistics.

29. The Conference reviewed the statistical activities and programmes of the ECAFE secretariat and noted with great concern the lack of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support for the regional programme of statistical meetings. It rescheduled the secretariat's programme of meetings, providing for only three meetings for 1974 and leaving the option open for subsequent years. The Conference approved the continuation of the work on commodity balances and noted the plan of the ECAFE secretariat, the Asian Development Bank, the Institute of Developing Economies (Tokyo) and FAO jointly to begin trial compilation of selected commodities in 1974 (see para. 25).

30. The Conference considered that the proposed terms of reference of its successor body, which was the subject of an intensive review, should be strengthened to provide, inter alia, that it or its successor body should be the adviser to ECAFE on statistical matters and should report directly to it, should have power to approve the work programme of the ECAFE Statistics Division and should determine the policy in relation to the operation of the Asian Statistical Institute (Tokyo).

31. A Joint Meeting of Planners and Statisticians was held in co-operation with the Government of the USSR at Alma Ata, USSR, in August-September 1972. The planning process and programming techniques, progress reporting and evaluation, statistics needed for regional and sectoral planning, construction and uses of national accounts and balances, economic and social indicators and organization of statistics for planning were discussed. The state of statistics in the ECAFE region was reviewed and the need for close co-operation between planners and statisticians in the formulation and evaluation of development plans was stressed.

32. A Working Group on Statistics of the Distribution of Income, Consumption and Accumulation met in July 1973. It discussed the objectives, purpose, character and scope of the system of statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation, and the concepts, definitions and classifications of the statistics and recommended tables. It examined a simplified adaptation of the system, reviewed the methods of compiling the statistics of income distribution in the countries of the ECAFE region, and discussed the sources, methods and problems of gathering data and the methods of adjusting income distribution statistics.

D. Statistical training

33. The Asian Statistical Institute (Tokyo), which commenced operations in June 1970, has successfully completed three general courses and three advanced courses. In addition, it organized at Suva, Fiji, a four-week course in April-May 1972 for the countries of the South Pacific region and a country course on the revised System of National Accounts (SNA) at Seoul, the Republic of Korea

during May-June 1972 and Teheran, Iran in June-July 1973. The fourth general course and advanced course are to conclude on 29 May 1974. A country course in statistical methods is planned for Kabul, Afghanistan in June-July 1974. So far, the Institute has given training to nearly 200 persons. A mid-project review meeting was held in February 1974 to consider extending the operation of the Institute into its second phase (1975-79) when the first phase ends on 31 March 1975.

34. With the assistance of two experts provided by the Government of France on a non-reimbursable basis, the first round of training courses was organized in Vientiane, Laos; Saigon, Republic of Viet-Nam; and Phnom-Penh, Khmer Republic; for the French-speaking countries of the region. A second round of these training programmes has commenced in Vientiane.

35. Efforts to organize a subregional centre for training in data processing at New Delhi, India, had received a setback, due to funds not forthcoming from UNDP. However, the proposal has recently been reactivated, on the assurance that some assistance will now be forthcoming from UNDP.

E. Advisory services

36. The regional advisory services, financed from UNDP funds, were drastically cut to only one adviser (national accounts) during 1973 and 1974. This adviser undertook missions to the Cook Islands, Western Samoa, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan and participated as a lecturer in the country course on national accounts held at Teheran, organized by the Asian Statistical Institute in collaboration with the Central Bank of Iran, May-June 1973.

37. A regional adviser on data processing provided by the Federal Republic of Germany on a funds-in-trust basis assisted Sri Lanka, Laos, the Republic of Viet-Nam, the Philippines, Iran, Malaysia, Singapore, Pakistan, Indonesia and India in their data processing problems. He participated as a lecturer in the general course given at the Asian Statistical Institute in April 1973.

38. For details of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations system, including ECAFE, see E/CN.3/446.

III. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA (ECLA)

39. The statistical activities of ECLA are chiefly concentrated in the Statistical Division. Its programme has been concerned with the collection, analysis and presentation of statistics, for use by the ECLA secretariat and for general information, in the economic and social fields. In the context of the global programme of the United Nations Statistical Office, promotion of the development of national statistics and the improvement of international comparability are pursued. The programme covers participation in the regional technical assistance programme, the organization of seminars and working groups and the maintenance of close contact with regional activities of the specialized agencies and with the Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI).

40. The last issue of the semi-annual Statistical Bulletin for Latin America was Vol. IX, devoted exclusively to retrospective time series extending approximately over a 20-year period for the national accounts of the countries in the region. Beginning with 1973, a Statistical Annual will replace the Bulletin. The change in the frequency of publication was considered necessary because of the inevitable delay in receiving statistical series from some countries and the time needed for processing and editing. The scope of the publication has been enlarged considerably; the inclusion of statistical data on balance of payments and transport is particularly noteworthy in this respect.

41. The Division participated in the preparation of the statistical basis for the document "Latin America and the International Development Strategy: first regional appraisal. Annex: Indicators utilized in the appraisal" (E/CN.12/947/Add.2/Rev.1), which includes indicators of national accounts, the external sector, the social and demographic area and the industrial sector.

A. National accounts and related matters

42. A Working Group was organized on the System of Social and Demographic Statistics, in Santiago, Chile, 11-15 December 1972 (report: ST/ECLA/Conf.44/L.6). For this meeting, the document "System of social-demographic statistics" (ST/ECLA/Conf.44/L.5) was prepared as an illustrative example. "Fuentes de Información sobre los Principales Campos de las Estadísticas Demográficas y Sociales en América Latina" was a reference document.

43. The work on co-ordination continued with a permanent group of Latin American experts on social accounting, formed on occasion of the meeting of the Working Group on Statistics of Distribution Income, Consumption and Wealth, held in Chile, November 1971 (ST/ECLA/Conf.42/L.6), which is now composed of 80 members. The document "Sources of statistics on the distribution of income in Latin America" (ST/ECLA/Conf.42/L.4) is being maintained with current information.

44. The series on product expressed in national currency and United States dollars (Parity of exchange rate) are maintained at current prices for ECLA's use.

45. The regional adviser in national accounts prepared a document on the "Present state of national accounts in Latin America" for the Thirteenth General Conference of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth, July 1973.

46. A document is being prepared, based on a selected collection of sources on the public sector, with synoptic tables referring to the following levels:
(a) public sector; (b) general government; (c) central government.

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B. Evaluation and analysis of Latin American data
on income distribution

47. A joint ECLA/IBRD research project began in July 1973. The first phase will end in June 1974, and a second phase is already programmed extending from July 1974 to June 1975. The first phase of the project was devoted to the analysis and presentation of available data on income distribution and related socio-economic characteristics from household surveys.

48. The material existing at ECLA for about 120 surveys was reviewed and 31 surveys (for 13 countries) were selected. With the data from those surveys, a data file on income distribution is being organized. A paper "A data file on income distribution based on household surveys in Latin American countries" (ECLA/EST/DRAFT/108) was presented at the Second Latin American Conference on Research in Income and Wealth and the XXI Seminar of the ECIEL (Estudios Conjuntos sobre Integración Económica Latinamericana) Programme, both held in Rio de Janeiro, January 1974.

49. Work is in progress on devising controls for the survey data included in the file, by comparison with population census results and national accounts estimates. The preparation and editing of the tabulations are currently under way.

C. External trade and balance of payments

50. For a meeting entitled Estadística de Relaciones Económicas Internacionales, held in West Berlin from 10 to 28 September 1973, the following documents were prepared: "Relación de precios del intercambio de América Latina" (E/CN.12/L.99); "Nomenclaturas Arancelarias y Clasificaciones Estadísticas del Comercio Exterior" (E/CN.12/L.100); "El Sector Externo en las Experiencias de Insumo-Producto de América Latina" (E/CN.12/L.101).

51. Other documents were also presented at the meeting, prepared by the statistical departments of the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), the Secretaría Permanente del Tratado General de Integración Económica Centroamericana (SIECA), the Andean Sub-Regional Group, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the Customs Co-operation Council and the statistical offices and agencies of economic research of the Federal Republic of Germany.

52. Recently work has been concentrated on the rationalization of the registers of statistical information for electronic data processing, preparing for this purpose data on the balance of payments of 23 countries of the region from 1960 through 1973. Efforts have been made to rationalize programmes on external trade for computation, especially the calculation of quantum and unit indexes of exports and imports, terms of trade, sources and destination and structure on trade under different classifications in regional and interregional use. For this purpose, contacts are maintained with the statistical office of LAFTA, SIECA and the countries of the region in order to obtain data on external trade on magnetic tapes. A duplicate of this information is sent to the Statistical Office of the United Nations.

D. Industrial and distributive trade statistics

53. The document "América Latina: Principales Indicadores Derivados de los Censos y Encuestas Industriales" (E/CN.12/L.45/Add.2) was issued. Further information is available for a new addendum. Industrial production indexes for all the countries of the region were reclassified according to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), Rev.2. Regional indexes by ISIC groups from 1960 onwards were obtained for the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), the Andean Group, LAFTA, the Central American Common Market and the region as a whole. Data for employment, wages and man-hours worked in industry by ISIC groups was tabulated for all countries of the area. This information, as well as the industrial production indexes will be published presently.

E. Demographic and social statistics

54. The Statistical Division collaborated in the organization of the first meeting of a Group of Experts for the Improvement of the Sources of Demographic Statistics, held in Buenos Aires, 25-29 March 1974. It prepared three documents for the meeting: "Situación de las Estadísticas Vitales en América Latina"; "Estudio de un Método para Evaluar la Integridad de las Estadísticas Vitales en América Latina"; and "Algunos Indicadores Socioeconómicos de los Países de América Latina".

55. At the meeting, a Permanent Committee was formed. It is scheduled to meet in Santiago in November 1974.

F. Agreements with UNICEF

56. A new version of a publication on children and youth is to be published jointly with UNICEF at the end of 1974.

G. Other work

57. A comparison is being made between the tabulations proposed in the document "Preparation and use of population and housing census tabulations", presented to the Seminar of the same name held in Santiago in August 1972, and the tabulations included in the publications of the last censuses of each country of the region.

58. Technical assistance has been given to the countries in the region by regional advisers in the following fields: sampling for demographic statistics; computer methods. vital statistics; population and housing census (for South America); population and housing census (for Central America); national accounts (till the end of 1973). For details of the United Nations system, including ECLA, see E/CN.3/446.

59. In accordance with ECLA resolution 325 (XV) on CIADI (Latin American Information Centre), as of August 1973, this unit depends administratively on the

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Statistical Division. It has been servicing all divisions of ECLA, specific areas of its activity being external trade; industrial statistics; economic projections; and finance and administration.

60. Computer rental is now under consideration in order to allow a more dynamic systematization of work and a fuller utilization of the latest technological advances.

IV. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (ECA)

61. During the period in question, the principal components of ECA statistical programmes continued to be the development and co-ordination of national statistical services and the development of a centralized statistical and economic information service for the African region.

A. Development of national statistical services

62. Included under this heading are statistical advisory services, training and the application of standard methodology through secretariat studies and technical meetings.

1. Statistical advisory services

63. During the period under review, there were only two regional advisers, one each in national accounts and economic surveys. The regional adviser in national accounts will have carried out 17 country missions by October 1974. Although this is a smaller number of country visits compared with the previous period, the work involved was in fact heavier as the missions were related mainly to the preparation of selected accounts and tables of the revised System of National Accounts (SNA) based on existing country data. It was particularly encouraging that an increasing number of African countries formerly adhering to the French (Courcier) system of national accounting have now started to implement the revised SNA. Regional advisory services in economic surveys have taken the form of country visits to 15 countries and the preparation as an annual exercise of ECA's Economic Data Summaries for 45 countries of the region. Visits were made to a further 24 countries in the region by ECA staff members, mainly to collect up-to-date economic and statistical data.

2. Statistical training

64. Training of professional statisticians in Africa remains a priority project mainly on account of almost continuous loss of statistical personnel from national statistical offices to other government departments, industry, etc. The principal United Nations assisted projects at the professional level include the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics, Kampala, Uganda; the Statistics Training Institute, Yaoundé, Cameroon; the Statistical Training Centre, Haile Selassie I

University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and the statistical training project at the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The latter two projects are UNESCO-assisted. From some formerly United Nations-assisted ^{training} projects, the financing has now been taken over by national and other bodies and United Nations assistance has ceased, e.g., the National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics, Rabat, Morocco, is now a national project; the East African Statistical Training Centre, Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, has been taken over by the East African Community. Although none of these projects is now financed through ECA budgetary arrangements, the secretariat has maintained interest and has actively participated in the promotion of some of the training programmes.

65. For details of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations system, including ECA, see E/CN.3/446.

3. Application of standard statistical methodology

66. A Manual on Demographic Sample Surveys (with the exception of chapter 11) was presented at the eighth session of the Conference of African Statisticians, November 1973, and a complete version of the manual is expected to be available in 1974. It is rather bulky, but summaries will be provided and the manual should prove useful for demographic and statistical training centres. Preparation of a Manual on National Accounts for African Countries has been started; it is intended as a supplement to the manual on national accounts for developing countries currently in preparation by the United Nations Statistical Office.

67. Several technical meetings were scheduled to be held during the period. However, due to financial stringency, only two training workshops took place, namely, a Working Group on Household Sector Statistics, November 1972, and a seminar on preparation for the 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, November 1973. Two additional training workshops are scheduled for 1974 subject to finance being available, namely, a seminar on external transactions, which is expected to be held in the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics, Kampala, as a joint endeavour of the Institute and ECA, and a seminar on economic information services. Some of the ECA meetings which could not be held as scheduled have been implemented through the preparation of written documents.

68. A working group on methodology, organization and content of household surveys is due to meet in September 1974. The group has as its aim the preparation of background material for the formulation of a much larger action programme, namely, a continuing multipurpose household survey programme for Africa. In the formulation and implementation of the programme, the United Nations Statistical Office, the Population Division, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) would play a leading role. As a follow-up to the African Census Programme (see E/CN.3/447), the new programme establishes a continuing household survey capability for the collection of integrated demographic, social and related economic data. The work envisaged under the programme will include technical assistance to individual countries in establishing continuing household survey capabilities at the country level and a

regional supporting service. The group is expected to provide ^{background} information as a basis for an appeal to prospective donor agencies for participation in the project.

B. Development of a regional statistical and economic information service

69. Components of the secretariat's efforts to establish a centralized statistical service for the African region are: (a) the preparation of regular statistical publications and the provision of data to meet special requests, as well as the building of a regional data bank in economic, social and demographic statistics, and (b) statistical studies on selected topics through the collection and analysis of materials from all possible sources.

1. Collection and dissemination of information

70. The following regular statistical publications have been issued:

Statistical Newsletter (in both English and French, 3 times a year);

Statistical and Economic Information Bulletin (in English or French, with a summary given in the other language. Three times a year, contains mainly articles and up-to-date economic information);

Foreign Trade Statistics of Africa, Series A, Direction of Trade (bilingual, quarterly);

Foreign Trade Statistics of Africa, Series B, Trade by Commodity and by Country (bilingual, half-yearly);

Statistical Yearbook for Africa (bilingual. Since 1973, data presented on a country basis. Separate volumes for subregions are now being issued);

African Economic Indicators (annual);

Economic Data Summaries (in English, for 45 individual countries annually);

Bibliography of African Statistical Publications (biennial);

African Directory of Statisticians (biennial).

2. Statistical studies

71. ECA's regional price comparison project is an extension of the International Comparison Project (ICP). Unlike the ICP, ECA's price data have been limited to the capital cities of African countries and the means of collection has primarily been through postal questionnaires, due to severe limitations in travel funds. Twenty country replies to an ECA questionnaire on consumer prices for capital cities for September 1973 had been received by the beginning of May 1974. Similar requests for price data for the month of September 1974 are intended to be sent to national statistical offices of the African region.

72. Other statistical studies conducted during the period under review include a study on analysis of sectoral deflators for African countries, studies on patterns of private consumption expenditures in the African region, movements in capital formation and the collection of statistics of distribution and services.

73. Analyses of sectoral deflators in national accounting for selected African countries were carried out with a view to developing procedures and workable schemes for the development of sectoral deflators for those countries of the region for which both price and quantity data were lacking. The study will facilitate the preparation and introduction of sectoral deflators for constant national accounts estimates at the regional level.

74. The secretariat has completed studies of structure of private consumption expenditure for the north, west and east African subregions, based on material from household budget surveys, national accounts and other sources. The project is linked with ECA's regional price comparison project in that it would provide the latter with some of the weighting patterns for binary comparisons.

75. A study on the structure and change in capital formation between 1960 and 1970 for African countries has been published. A similar study on the growth of capital budgets between 1960 and 1970 for the public sector is expected to be completed before end-1974.

76. In addition, a study on food balance-sheets for African countries has been planned, in collaboration with FAO.

77. A major part of the work of the division consists of the preparation of early estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) for individual African countries based on available material, including the information collected during country visits and published in the Economic Data summaries. These GDP estimates are now being recognized as a considerable contribution to the data sources available for the region.

V. INTER-AMERICAN STATISTICAL INSTITUTE (IASI)

A. Inter-American Statistical Conference

78. The sixth Inter-American Statistical Conference (VI IASI), convened by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), was held at Santiago, Chile, 6-14 November 1972, to discuss the following topics: (a) appraisal of the statistical activities carried out during the period 1967-1972, that is, since the fifth Conference; (b) acceleration of national statistical production to meet the demands of the 1970s; and (c) establishment of orientation and priorities for inter-American statistical activities to be developed in the immediate future, that is, until the seventh Conference.

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79. The Conference approved two important groups of recommendations. The first group, addressed to the Governments of the member states, established guidelines for the determination, priority of and attention to the statistical demand, the evaluation and improvement of the quality of statistics, and the strengthening of the institutions responsible for the collection, processing, dissemination, and analysis of statistics; those recommendations give particular emphasis to the consolidation of the national statistical systems, training of statistical personnel and appropriate utilization of international technical and financial co-operation. The second group, addressed to the international organizations, requests them to take into account the conclusions of the Conference in examining matters related to the statistical field, support and encourage the efforts made by the Governments to carry out the tasks entrusted to them and allocate the financial resources necessary for implementing the recommendations and related aspects. The Conference also gave the organs of the inter-American system specific indications as to the work that merits priority in the preparation and execution of the programmes of the statistical organs of the OAS.

80. Twenty-one of the 24 OAS-IASI member countries and 3 non-members participated in the Conference; in addition, representatives of 18 international organizations and 40 national institutions were in attendance.

B. General Assembly of IASI members

81. Simultaneously with the sixth IASC, the Sixth General Assembly of IASI members was held in Santigao. Three technical meetings were conducted on the following topics: the use of data in planning and evaluating social and economic development programmes; data storage and retrieval and the handling of special tabulations in computerized systems; and quality control in statistical operations.

C. Committee on Improvement of National Statistics (COINS)

82. COINS, composed of the chief statistical officers of the American nations, held its eleventh session at Ottawa, Canada, 25 September-2 October 1973. The concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations relating to the following sections of the Inter-American Program of Basic Statistics (PIEB) were approved: agriculture (supply/utilization balances for food and agricultural commodities; and economic accounts), internal trade and services, transportation (road transport; and water transport) and social security. Discussions on the Program of the 1970 Census of America (COTA-1970) included consideration of the status of national censuses of population, housing and agriculture as well as activities planned in relation to economic censuses. There was also a preliminary exchange of viewpoints on the Program of the 1980 Census of America.

83. On the occasion of the COINS session, two round tables were held, the first on problems and experiences of the American countries in the censuses taken under COTA-1970 and the second on the electronic data processing system in a national statistical office.

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84. With regard to statistical co-ordination, there were also conducted (a) informal meetings, according to subregions, of members of COINS from countries belonging to the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), the Andean Group, and the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), for the exchange of viewpoints and information on needs for statistical data, problems faced in meeting them and possible solutions; and (b) an informal meeting of observers from international organizations to exchange information on matters of common interest in relation to statistical work in progress and planned in the region.

85. The twelfth session of COINS is programmed to be held at Lima, Peru in 1975.

86. With respect to sessions of subcommittees of COINS, preparations were made to hold the first session of the Subcommittee on Statistics of Science and Technology (Washington, D.C., 14-21 May 1974), for the purpose of examining draft regional standards (concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations) for this field for inclusion in PIEB. The Department of Scientific Affairs of the General Secretariat of OAS is collaborating in this activity.

D. Program of the 1970 Census of America

87. Of 25 countries members of IASI, 21 took their censuses of population and housing since 1968, and 16 took censuses of agriculture. The activities related to these included promotion, development of inter-American standards, review of census plans, preparation or revision of census schedules, forms and instructions, participation in the organization and taking of experimental censuses, technical assistance and personnel training. These activities were carried out in collaboration with international organizations, principally those of the United Nations system (Statistical Office, Population Division, FAO, ECLA and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE)), and in some cases with national organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development.

88. The eleventh session of COINS approved the regional standards for the economic censuses which will be taken during the second cycle of COTA-1970.

E. Technical assistance

89. During the period under review, technical assistance missions - usually of short duration - were carried out (or are in process) in various fields including household sample surveys; agriculture estimates; national accounts; labour statistics; census cartography and other preliminary census work; processing of census results; review and preparation of price indexes; income and family expenditure survey; industrial statistics; sampling; statistical organization; and external trade statistics.

F. Statistical training

90. Statistical training activities are grouped in regional, subregional and national courses.

1. Regional courses

91. Most of these courses are conducted at the Inter-American Statistical Training Center (CIENES) in Santiago, Chile, whose programme includes three regular annual courses offered simultaneously and other occasional activities.

92. In Guatemala, a Course on Organization and Methodology of Economic Censuses was held at the Dirección General de Estadística during the period 9 October-14 December 1973, with 24 participants. A similar course will be conducted in Bogotá, Colombia during the period 9 May-22 July 1974, at the Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE).

2. Subregional course

93. A Course on Statistical Techniques of Subregional Scope has been held in Panama, using the facilities offered by that Government and with the collaboration of professors of CIENES. Its purpose was to train statistical personnel from the Central American Isthmus and the Caribbean countries. Two courses have been given, in 1972 and 1973, both during the period 16 August-14 December, with 35 and 29 participants, respectively.

3. National courses

94. At the request of the Governments, courses have been carried out, with the collaboration of professors of CIENES: courses on statistical techniques in Santiago, Chile for personnel of the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas; courses on economic and social statistics, in the Superintendencia do Desenvolvimento do Nordeste (SUDENE), in Recife, Brazil; courses on quality control in Chile, Panama, and Peru; a course on sampling theory for personnel of the Ministry of Agriculture of Argentina; and a course on statistics for development at the Escuela Superior de Administración in Peru.

95. For details of IASI's technical assistance activities, see E/CN.3/446.

G. Publications

96. The 1972 edition of América en Cifras was published, composed of eleven volumes. Although it is published in Spanish only, an English pamphlet for each booklet has been incorporated into the publication; in addition other important elements contained in the tables (title, heading, explanatory and foot-notes etc.) are published in English.

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97. The Boletín Estadístico provides the more urgent data produced in the period between editions of América en Cifras, and is composed of 12 issues per year.

98. The quarterly journal Estadística, the official organ of IASI, constitutes one of its means of fostering statistical interchange and development in the Western Hemisphere.

