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(c) Statistical Office of the United Nations

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES, MEDIUM-TERM PLAN, 1980-1983,
AND WORK PROGRAMME OF THE STATISTICAL OFFICE
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Report of the Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

1. The present Conference room paper is to be read in conjunction with E/CN.3/532.
2. The medium-term plan in statistics for 1980-1983 is described in chapter 24 of the proposed United Nations medium-term plan. It is composed of two programmes, in line with the recent restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system: Programme 1, pertaining to the newly established Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (IESA), and Programme 2, pertaining to the newly established Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (TCD). Both programmes are carried out by the Statistical Office as an integrated entity located in IESA and servicing both Departments as well as the system as a whole. This arrangement will be reviewed at the end of a year to determine whether any changes are necessary.
3. The relevant portions of chapter 24 are reproduced in section II below. Section I describes the proposed programme of work for 1980-1981 under the various sub-programmes.
4. It will be recalled that, while providing statistical services to other units within the Secretariat and to other United Nations bodies, the Statistical Office serves as a focal point for the international statistical system. It carries out its responsibilities under the guidance of the Statistical Commission on behalf of the Economic and Social Council. In executing the various elements of programmes 1 and 2, the Statistical Office works within the framework of three over-all objectives:

First, the collection, compilation, evaluation and dissemination of statistics in many diverse but interrelated sectors;

Secondly, the promotion of the improvement of national statistics in these sectors and their international comparability, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries;

Thirdly, the promotion of the co-ordination of statistical activities and programmes of the United Nations system, including those of the regional commissions, and the provision of over-all leadership.
5. The outputs of the first objective are the statistical publications and statistics disseminated in various other forms.

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The publications are recurrent, in most cases annually, in some cases more frequently and in a few less frequently. Improvements are introduced regularly in content, presentation, appearance, accessibility to users and so on. Such improvements will continue during the medium-term plan period with increasing effectiveness as the integrated computer system and related procedures for storing and retrieving statistical data come to full fruition.

6. The second objective, the improvement of national statistics, involves research and development and includes studies of national practices. This objective is greatly facilitated by the fact that, with appropriate adaptations and taking into account the special circumstances of developing countries, statistical procedures, methodologies and technology are largely transferable from one country to another. The outputs of this objective take two highly interrelated forms, namely (a) direct technical co-operation and advice, including training activities and technical backstopping in the field in interested developing countries; and (b) guidelines, recommendations and technical manuals on standardized concepts, definitions and classifications, the types of information to be collected, the survey and census designs needed to produce reliable data, practical collection procedures, efficient data processing techniques, the possible range and content of the statistical outputs and so on. During the medium-term plan period, it is expected that technical co-operation projects and related backstopping activities will concentrate on providing assistance in planning, organizing and implementing national population, housing and industrial censuses; processing, tabulating and evaluating census results and strengthening national household survey and computer data processing capabilities. Assistance will, of course, continue in fields such as national accounts, industry and vital registration. Guidelines, recommendations and technical manuals will be developed or updated in these areas as well as in fields such as energy, environment, international trade, shipping and prices, with continued emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

7. The third objective, the promotion of co-ordination, is intended to ensure that maximum coherence prevails in the statistical programmes and activities of the various bodies of the United Nations system and that duplication is avoided. The outputs of this objective take the form of greater harmonization in the practices in regard to concepts, definitions, classifications and methods recommended for national as well as international use; regular exchanges of statistical questionnaires and other information and joint or collaborative undertakings.

8. The three over-all objectives described above are highly interrelated and fortify one another. As national statistical data improve and become more plentiful, more and better statistics become available for international use. A vast and very active

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communications network with national statistical agencies has been established and is used in carrying out the work on collection, evaluation and dissemination of statistics and the studies of country practices. In this process a great deal about national statistical agencies is learnt in the Statistical Office. The staff gains vital insights into the objectives, circumstances, needs, problems and capabilities of the statistical agencies of developing countries and elsewhere. This helps greatly in the evaluation of technical co-operation projects and in the provision of relevant technical advice and assistance. It also aids in making more relevant the guidelines, recommendations and manuals issued to help improve national statistics. As international statistical practices and concepts are harmonized, the resulting statistics in the various sectors become more compatible and more suitable for national as well as international use, thus enhancing greatly the value of the total available data base.

9. It has, accordingly, been a major goal of the Statistical Office to bring about a maximum amount of feedback and integration in the execution of the various elements of its work. This has involved the utilization of available expertise for project formulation, execution and evaluation, irrespective of the sources of finance. Thus, staff members in posts financed by the regular budget provide essential inputs to technical co-operation and other extra-budgetary projects, while staff in posts financed by extra-budgetary sources provide essential inputs to regular statistical projects. Such integrated use of resources, while maximizing cost-effectiveness, is essential in serving effectively not only the requirements of TCD and IESA but also in responding to the statistical needs of other users, in particular Member States, other units of the Secretariat and other international bodies.

I. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK, 1980-1981

10. The proposed programme of work that follows is based on the 1980-1981 proposed budget for the statistical programmes, which will be submitted to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at their 1979 sessions. Each sub-programme is described separately, following a detailed statement of its objective. The over-all legislative basis for the programme is contained in Economic and Social Council resolutions 8 (I) and 8 (II) and, most recently, the Council's decision 220 (LXII) to take note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its nineteenth session and to approve the objective and work programme recommended therein.

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PROGRAMME 1. STATISTICS

Subprogramme 1. International trade, industry, natural resources and energy

The objective is to provide more comprehensive, reliable and timely statistics on international trade, natural resources, energy, industry, transport and related areas, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

1.1 Collection, compilation and dissemination of industrial, construction and distributive trade statistics - recurrent publications

- (a) Yearbook of Industrial Statistics (1980 and 1981)
- (b) Yearbook of Construction Statistics (1980 and 1981)
- (c) Indexes of industrial production, indexes of industrial employment, distributive trade statistics and other data in the Statistical Yearbook and the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (1980 and 1981)

1.2 Standards and methods of industrial, construction and distributive trade statistics

- (a) Revised international recommendations on the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics (1980)
- (b) Instruction materials for training workshops in preparation for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics (1981)
- (c) Preparatory work on the expansion of data collection on distributive trade statistics (1980)
- (d) Preparatory work on the extension of the collection of industrial statistics (value of production and stocks of selected commodities) (1981)
- (e) Studies to construct balances of stocks, production and trade and consumption as well as prices of major industrial non-energy commodities (1981)

1.3 Collection, compilation, dissemination and analysis of international trade statistics

- (a) Commodity Trade Statistics (1980 and 1981)

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- (b) Yearbook of International Trade Statistics (1980 and 1981)
- (c) World Trade Annual (1980 and 1981)
- (d) Supplement to the World Trade Annual (1980 and 1981)
- (e) Regular and special tables in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Yearbook (1980 and 1981)
- (f) Special tabulations and response to ad hoc requests, including computer tapes and microfiches.

1.4 Standards, methods and classifications of international trade statistics

- (a) Statistical analysis of the new distribution of commodities resulting from the implementation of SITC, Rev. 2, and of the new statistical sub-headings of the Customs Co-operation Council Nomenclature (CCCN) (1980).
- (b) Expert group meeting to review the first draft of the revision of the publication entitled International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions (1980).
- (c) Preparation of the 3rd revision of SITC, taking into account the results obtained by CCCN in the building up of the Harmonized System, the data on actual distribution of trade obtained in the statistical analysis carried out during the preceding year and the experience of developing countries (1981).
- (d) International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions (1981).

1.5 Recurrent publications and standards, methods and classification of energy statistics

- (a) World Energy Supplies (1980 and 1981)
- (b) Regular and special tables in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Yearbook (1980 and 1981)
- (c) Publication of national energy balances for selected countries (1980 and 1981)
- (d) Report to the Statistical Commission on the International Classification of Energy (1980)

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- (e) Publication of International Handbook of Energy Conversion Factors and Units of Measurement (1980)
- (f) Preparation of International Classification of Energy (1981)
- (g) Response to ad hoc requests, including computer tapes

1.6 Transport statistics

- (a) Continued collection and publication of economic statistics on transport statistics (1980 and 1981). On shipping statistics, efforts will be made to link the results with other related statistics such as merchant fleet, harbour reports, etc. (1981).
- (b) Preliminary study of requirements and possibilities of countries (mainly developing) establishing a special framework for the collection of economic statistics of transport, based on documents of customs and port authorities, and progress report to the Statistical Commission (1980).
- (c) First proposals for the revision of International Standard Definitions for Transport Statistics (1981).

Subprogramme 2: National accounts, income distribution and related statistics

The objective is to develop further and implement the system of national accounts and balances and related systems and classifications and to provide a framework for the integration of economic and social data and more comprehensive and reliable statistics on national accounts and balances and related areas, such as the distribution of income and consumption, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

2.1 Review and further development of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA)

- (a) Expert group meeting to review the status and plan the future development of SNA (1980).
- (b) Technical report for expert group: proposals for modifications of SNA arising from the review of country experience (1980).
- (c) Technical report for expert group: proposals for extension and updating of SNA (1980).

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- (d) Statistical Commission document: report on the expert group meeting on SNA, with proposals for further work (1980).
- (e) Statistical Commission document: the treatment of non-monetary transactions in SNA (1980).
- (f) Statistical Commission document: report on the relation of the revised SNA to the IMF Balance of Payments Manual, fourth edition (1980).
- (g) Handbook of National Accounting. Part 6, The balance of payments and the national accounts (1980).
- (h) Technical paper: survey of country practices in compiling regional data in the national accounts (1980).
- (i) Technical report: draft guidelines on the treatment of regional data in the national accounts (1981).
- (j) Handbook of National Accounting. Part 7, Income distribution (1981).
- (k) Technical report and Handbook of National Accounting. Part 8, Balance sheets and national wealth (1981).
- (l) Handbook of National Accounting. Part 9, The uses of national accounts (1981).

2.2 Promotion of linkage between economic statistics and social and demographic statistics

- (a) Statistical Commission document: progress report on the role of the national accounts as a framework for the integration of detailed survey and administrative data (1980).
- (b) Technical report: the structure of linkages among social data bases (1980).
- (c) Technical report: the role of the national accounts as an organizing frame for social microdata (1981).

2.3 Linking of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS)

- (a) Statistical Commission document: the treatment of capital in SNA and MPS (1980).

- (b) Technical report: the treatment of non-material outputs in SNA and MPS (1981).

2.4 Development, updating and harmonizing of standard international classifications

- (a) Register of countries and areas (1980).
- (b) International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services: Indexes (1980).
- (c) Meeting of Joint Panel on World-Level Classifications (1980).
- (d) Progress report on concepts and classifications for income distribution statistics (1980).
- (e) Draft revision of International Standard Industrial Classification (1981).

2.5 Collection, compilation and dissemination of national accounts statistics

- (a) Recurrent publication of national accounts data and estimates in the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, Statistical Yearbook, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. Response to ad hoc requests (1980 and 1981).
- (b) Studies on the sources and methods of national accounts data and their evaluation at the country level (1980 and 1981).
- (c) Preparation of public finance tables for the Statistical Yearbook (1980 and 1981).

2.6 Statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation

- (a) Publication of statistics on the distribution of household income, consumption and accumulation (1980 and 1981).

Subprogramme 3: Price statistics and related areas

The objective is to develop further the methodology and collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on prices and related areas.

3.1 International Comparison Project (ICP)

- (a) Revision of specification manuals for consumption, producers durables and construction for extension of benchmark estimates and as reference works (1980).
- (b) Report containing detailed national product and purchasing power comparisons, up-dating benchmark estimates for 34 countries to 1978 or 1979 (1981).
- (c) Preliminary report of (i) benchmark estimates for 12-18 new countries, (ii) reduced information methodology for extending benchmark estimates to a system of world coverage, and (iii) a methodology that will incorporate the five detailed regional comparisons into a world system, allowing comparisons between countries of different regions at a level of disaggregation useful for analysis (1981).
- (d) Preliminary report of constant price series for international comparisons over time (1981).

3.2 Price statistics for commodities entering international trade

- (a) Dissemination of price data and indexes on goods entering international trade through contributions to recurrent publications and in response to ad hoc requests (1980 and 1981).
- (b) Publication of:
 - (i) Second revision of Methods Used in Compiling the United Nations Price Indexes for Basic Commodities in International Trade (1980).
 - (ii) Statistical Analysis of Unit Values (1980).
 - (iii) Method used in compiling export price indexes of manufactured goods (1981).

3.3 Methodological development of price and related statistics, and co-ordination of related international activities (1980 and 1981)

- (a) Establishment of a central facility for the development, co-ordination and systematization of the collection, compilation, evaluation and dissemination of price data, now dispersed in different, subject-matter areas throughout the international statistical system.

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- (b) Promotion of the improvement of national statistics of prices and price indexes through technical co-operation and the preparation of manuals and technical studies, including:
 - (i) Manual on consumer prices (1980).
 - (ii) Survey of country practices in the use of price indexes for inflation accounting and indexation (1980).
 - (iii) Survey of country practices on deflation of income shares (1981).
 - (iv) Technical report on price indexes for inflation accounting and indexation (1981).

Subprogramme 4: Social and demographic statistics

The objective is to develop further, systematize, integrate and disseminate statistics in the social, demographic and environmental areas, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

4.1 Integration and improvement of social and demographic statistics

- (a) Expert group meeting on household surveys and publication of the revision of Handbook of Household Surveys (Part I) (1980).
- (b) Study of national practices relating to concepts and classifications of type and size of place (1980).
- (c) Report to Statistical Commission on draft guidelines on age-group classifications (1980).
- (d) Reports to Statistical Commission on national and international work on (i) social indicators and (ii) statistical classifications of special relevance to social and demographic statistics (1980).
- (e) Publication of guidelines on age classifications (1981).
- (f) Publication of the 14th report on Sample Surveys of Current Interest (1981).

4.2 Development and use of statistics for services to children and youth

- (a) Expansion of the UNICEF-funded social statistics improvement programmes to an additional five developing countries (1980).

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- (b) Expansion of the UNICEF-funded social statistics improvement programmes to an additional four developing countries (1981).
- (c) Report to Statistical Commission of the results of a survey of pilot programmes in a selected number of countries, aimed at improving the availability, relevance and timeliness of social statistics with particular reference to statistics concerning the needs of children and youth (1980).

4.3 Demographic statistics methods

- (a) Expert group meeting on international migration statistics to consider, inter alia, a consultant's report on (i) methods of collection and compilation of consolidated statistics on arrivals and departures and (ii) further programme of work in this field (1980).
- (b) Study of national experiences and plans in the construction and use of a census data base in connexion with population censuses and preparation of technical report (1980 and 1981).
- (c) Revision of Handbook of Vital Statistics Methods, Part I (1980).
- (d) Study of census staffing and cost requirements (1980).
- (e) Joint United Nations/WHO expert group meeting to consider draft guidelines for the collection and compilation of statistics on abortion in those countries in which abortion is legal (to be financed by extra-budgetary resources) and related report to the Statistical Commission (1980).
- (f) Handbook of Population and Housing Census Methods, Part II (1981).
- (g) Technical report on methods of collecting and compiling consolidated statistics of all arrivals and departures (1981).
- (h) Interregional workshop on potential uses of remote sensing technology in population and housing censuses and related statistical work and publication of report jointly with Outerspace Affairs Division (to be financed by extra-budgetary resources) (1981).

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- 4.4 Collection, compilation and dissemination of demographic statistics - recurrent publications
- (a) Demographic Yearbook (1980 and 1981).
 - (b) Population and Vital Statistics Report (1980 and 1981).
 - (c) Special tabulations and response to ad hoc requests, including computer tapes.
- 4.5 Housing statistics methods
- (a) Report to Statistical Commission on national and international activities on housing statistics.
 - (b) Initial report on 1980 housing census experience (1981).
- 4.6 Collection, compilation and dissemination of social and housing statistics
- (a) Compendium of Social Statistics (fourth edition) (1980 and 1981).
 - (b) Publication on housing statistics, 1978-1980 (1981).
 - (c) Special tabulations and response to ad hoc requests, including computer tapes.
- 4.7 Statistics of the environment
- (a) Completion of the survey on country practices and plans and their requirements for environment statistics with a view to transferring knowledge and experience between countries in the further development of environment statistics (1980).
 - (b) Preliminary draft guidelines on concepts, definitions, classifications and methodology for the tabulation and analysis of statistics of the environment, together with related guidelines on sources and methods of data collection (1980).
 - (c) Pilot country studies to gain basic experience and to test the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines and methodology mentioned in (b) above (1980 and 1981).
 - (d) Regional expert group meetings of producers and users of environment statistics (1980).

- (e) Report to Statistical Commission on guidelines mentioned in (b) above (1980).
- (f) Report on assessment of the pilot country studies (1981).
- (g) Initiation of international reporting and publication of environment statistics (1981).

Subprogramme 5: Improved dissemination of statistics

The objective is to improve the variety, timeliness and quality of the statistical data disseminated by the United Nations, including general statistical compendia and special tabulations, and to give them wider distribution.

5.1 Compendia of economic and social statistics - recurrent publications

- (a) Statistical Yearbook (1980 and 1981)
- (b) Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (1980 and 1981)
- (c) Statistical Pocketbook (1980 and 1981)

5.2 Improved computerization of statistics (1980 and 1981)

- (a) Continued expansion and extension of the Integrated Statistical Information System to provide flexible means of generating ad hoc tabulations and performing on-line data management.
- (b) Further extension of photocomposition facilities to improve the presentation, timeliness and flexibility of statistical publications.
- (c) Co-ordination of data-base implementation with the regions and provision of facilities to exchange data between the various bases.

5.3 Review and co-ordination of statistical publications and assessment of the consistency and quality of the data

- (a) Improved presentation, timeliness and consistency of the statistical publications of the Statistical Office and co-ordination with those of the regional commissions and specialized agencies (1980 and 1981)

Subprogramme 6: Co-ordination of international statistical programmes

The objective is to promote co-ordination of the international statistical system, including technical co-operation activities, and to provide statistical services to other units within the Secretariat and to other United Nations bodies. The Statistical Office serves as a focal point for the international statistical system.

6.1 Co-ordination of statistical programmes of the United Nations (1980 and 1981)

- (a) Continued technical and substantive servicing of the Statistical Commission and the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Programmes and implementation of decisions made at these meetings.
- (b) Continued maintenance of close working relationships between regional commissions, specialized agencies, other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and national statistical services through attendance at meetings and preparation and review of reports on matters such as questionnaires, data banks and exchange of data and concepts, definitions and classifications in use.
- (c) Issuance and maintenance of up-to-date standard country nomenclature for statistical use.
- (d) Preparation and improvement of reports of integrated five-year plans of (i) the regular and (ii) technical co-operation activities of the international statistical system.
- (e) Continuation of inter-agency studies to enhance the comparability, consistency and usefulness of international statistics.

6.2 Catalogues of economic and social statistics

- (a) Maintenance, updating and expansion of the Directory of International Statistics, including a classified inventory of available economic and social statistics of the United Nations system and non-United Nations international statistical organizations (1980 and 1981).

6.3 Improvement of statistical organization (1980 and 1981)

- (a) Preparation of booklets on organization, such as arrangement for the identification and evaluation of users' needs, effective methods of dissemination of data, reduction of burden on respondents, safeguarding confidentiality in social, demographic and economic statistics.
- (b) Studies analysing the organizational needs of various countries, especially developing countries, including field organizations for collecting statistics and efficient computer utilization.
- (c) Studies on the effectiveness of various national organizational structures, including the degree of centralization and co-ordination of national statistical services, and the relationship between central and local statistical services.

6.4 Statistical services provided to General Assembly organs and other bodies, on request (1980 and 1981)

- (a) Provision of data on national income, exchange rates, population and other data to the Committee on Contributions.
- (b) Provision of substantive services and statistical expertise to various units of the Secretariat and other United Nations bodies on request.

PROGRAMME 2. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION IN STATISTICS

Subprogramme 1. Improvement of statistical capabilities of developing countries

The objective is to assist developing countries through the relevant outputs described in Programme 1 above and, through advisory and technical co-operation activities, to further develop their statistical capability and the required statistics for monitoring and directing their economic and social development.

- (a) Assistance to developing countries to establish, develop and organize their statistical services so as to provide the capability necessary to obtain data required by planners, policy makers, administrators and other users.
- (b) Transfer of available statistical knowledge and techniques to developing countries inter alia through seminars, workshops, training institutes, technical meetings, country missions and relevant technical documents.

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- (c) Preparation of manuals adapted to meet required conditions and designed to assist countries in developing statistical subject-matter areas such as national accounts, income distribution, prices, energy, trade, industry, social, demographic and environment statistics; assistance to countries in the organization and conduct of censuses and establishment or strengthening of continuing household survey capabilities and vital registration systems and statistics.

Subprogramme 2: Improvement of statistical data processing capabilities of developing countries

The objective is to assist developing countries through advisory and technical co-operation activities to establish, expand and improve their computer data processing capabilities so as to enable them to apply up-to-date technology effectively for processing the statistical data required for their economic and social development.

- (a) Continued assistance in training computer systems and programming personnel.
- (b) Installation and demonstration of the use of statistical data-processing software in developing countries.
- (c) Preparation of statistical data-processing and information systems manuals for use by various government departments of Member States.

II. MEDIUM-TERM PLAN OF THE STATISTICAL OFFICE
OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR 1980-1983

11. The medium-term plan shown below is reproduced from chapter 24 (Statistics), Programmes 1 and 2, of the "Medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983." 1/

1/ Document A/33/6 (Part 24) and Corr. 1. The complete document will be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/33/6/Rev. 1).

CHAPTER 24
STATISTICS

PROGRAMME 1: DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

A. Organization

1. Intergovernmental review

24.1 The work of the Secretariat in this programme is reviewed by the United Nations Statistical Commission, which meets every two years. The next meeting will take place in February 1979 and the present medium-term plan has therefore not yet been reviewed by the Commission.

2. Secretariat

24.2 The Secretariat unit responsible for this programme is the Statistical Office, in which there were 91 Professional staff as at 1 July 1978, of which 22 were supported by extrabudgetary sources. The Office had the following organizational units as at 1 July 1978:

Organizational unit	Professional staff		
	Regular budget	Extrabudgetary sources	Total
International Trade and Related Statistics Branch	13	1	14
Economic Statistics and Special Projects Branch	15	2	17
Demographic and Social Statistics Branch	9	6	15
Systems and Standards Branch	10	2	12
External Relations and Dissemination Branch	9	4	13
Systems Development and Programming Unit	9	1	10
Office of the Director a/ and Internal Co-ordination and Planning Unit	4	6	10
	69	22	91

a/ Including three technical advisory posts.

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24.3 These figures include the 12 Professional posts from overhead resources which have been retained in the Statistical Office under the arrangement mentioned in paragraph 24.117 below.

3. Divergencies between current administrative structure and proposed programme structure

24.4 The statistics programme structure of the 1978-1981 medium-term plan and the proposed programme structure of the 1980-1983 medium-term plan follow the same pattern. The elements within the subprogrammes are combined to reflect the interdependence among related statistical subject-matter fields. In order to obtain administrative effectiveness, this pattern cannot be followed in all cases and therefore there are a number of divergencies, which, however, do not impede the implementation of the various elements of subprogrammes.

4. Expected completions

24.5 No programme elements described in paragraphs 5A.63 to 5A.71 in the proposed programme budget for biennium 1978-79 ^{1/} are expected to be completed before the start of the medium-term plan period 1980-1983. Within the programme elements, however, a number of activities will reach completion and the corresponding outputs will become available, as indicated below.

B. Co-ordination

1. Formal co-ordination within the Secretariat

24.6 The Statistical Office, in collaboration with the Statistics Division of the regional commissions, is responsible for collecting, compiling, evaluating and providing statistical data used by other units of the Secretariat, and for statistical standards and methodology in all economic, demographic and social fields not covered by the specialized agencies. The data provided are used for analytical studies, projections and research by the Population Division, the Centre for Development Planning, Projections and Policies, the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport and other departmental units and UNCTAD, UNIDO and other bodies. In co-ordination with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the Statistical Office also provides substantive advice to developing countries, as well as backstopping of technical personnel stationed in these countries. (This work is presented in detail in subprogrammes 1 and 2 of Programme 2, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development.)

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/32/6 and Corr.1 and 2), vol. I.

2. Co-ordination with the regional commissions

24.7 A special relationship exists between the Statistical Office and the statistical divisions of the regional commissions, in keeping with the fact that together they form an integrated statistical service of the United Nations. The Statistical Office and the statistical divisions of the regional commissions work closely on all important aspects of their programmes which are of mutual concern and are in frequent communication on substantive and administrative issues, in full recognition of the complementary and interdependent nature of their work.

24.8 A division of labour, which is adapted with changing circumstances, has existed for some years, drawing on the strengths of the regional commissions and the Statistical Office with a view to maximizing benefits to countries. Thus, in developing global standards and classifications, the Statistical Office draws on the experience of countries from all regions and, to an increasing extent, the regional commissions ensure that individual regional considerations and needs are fully taken into account. In the implementation of standards and classifications by countries, the regional commissions take the lead. More recently, where this was feasible, the regional commissions have been requested to take the lead in the development of regional standards. Thus, for the 1980 round of population and housing censuses, the regional commissions have taken the lead with respect to topics and tabulations, and the Statistical Office with respect to organization and administrative aspects. Each region is preparing regional recommendations and the global recommendations draw substantially on them. It is anticipated that a similar procedure will be followed with respect to the 1983 world programme of industrial statistics.

24.9 Responsibility has also been transferred to those regional commissions which were in a position to assume it for backstopping of regional institutes of statistics, in particular, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (Tokyo) and the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (Uganda), both of which were originally backstopped by the Statistical Office, though it continued to provide support upon request. In Africa, ECA is assuming responsibility for the statistical training programme. Similarly, the training workshops for the 1980 population and housing programme, initiated by the Statistical Office, have been established as regional projects, to be organized by the regional commissions with substantive assistance from the Statistical Office. Following Economic and Social Council resolution 2055 (LXII) of 5 May 1977, a National Household Survey Capability Programme has been designed by the Statistical Office as a regional programme, with substantive assistance when required from that Office.

24.10 In carrying out its responsibilities for global publications, such as the Statistical Yearbook, the Demographic Yearbook, the

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Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, the Yearbook of Industrial Statistics and the Yearbook of Construction Statistics, World Energy Supplies, the Statistical Office collects and processes country data. As required, the regional commissions assist in the collection process and it is anticipated that, in certain areas, such as environment statistics, some of the regional commissions will play the major collection role within an over-all framework developed centrally. The Statistical Office sends photocopies of the replies to all questionnaires and, on request, computer tapes to the respective regions. The regional commissions use these data for internal purposes or for their publications and collect additional detail when this is needed, for example, for the preparation of regional economic surveys. When a regional commission collects data for regional purposes which can also be used for global publications, the data are used by the Statistical Office.

3. Formal co-ordination within the United Nations system

24.11 There exists an explicit and carefully planned division of labour between the specialized agencies and the United Nations, which is being closely adhered to. The specialized agencies collect, compile and disseminate statistics, issue methodological documents and standards and provide technical assistance backstopping in their own fields. The United Nations statistics programme (a) works in the fields other than those covered by a specialized agency, (b) issues compendia, which include statistical data provided by all the specialized agencies, and (c) ensures the over-all co-ordination of the system and the integration of the statistical programmes. Where appropriate, joint projects are carried out with specialized agencies or other international organizations (for example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Economic Community, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the Inter-American Statistical Institute.

24.12 The co-ordination of statistical activities and programmes within the United Nations system is carried out through the Statistical Commission, the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities 2/ and the prevailing close working relations with the chief statisticians of the specialized agencies, other intergovernmental and non-governmental international organizations and the regional commissions. Continuing efforts are made to maintain a clear division of labour, to avoid duplication and to harmonize concepts and classifications, outputs and technical assistance. Illustrations of the high degree of co-ordination and the activities involved to achieve it are set forth below.

24.13 The Statistical Office, in collaboration with the statistical divisions of the regional commissions, the specialized agencies

2/ Subject to the decision of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

and other intergovernmental and non-governmental international organizations, regularly prepares, for review by the Statistical Commission during its biennial meetings, two five-year programmes, one covering the regular statistical activities and the other covering technical co-operation in statistics. In addition, reports describing problems and achievements during the preceding two years are prepared by all the parties concerned. These reports, together with the technical documents on various topics prepared by the Statistical Office, assist the Commission to assess, in some detail, the character of the work accomplished and planned and to determine the priorities and general directions in which future work should proceed.

24.14 The Directory of International Statistics is prepared every four years and provides a comprehensive picture of the responsibilities and statistical outputs produced by the various members of the international statistical system. This publication is a major aid to strengthening co-ordination and contains (a) a directory of international statistical services, (b) a list of international statistical series compiled by the United Nations system, (c) a list of concepts and recommendations, with published sources and (d) an inventory of computerized data bases of economic and social statistics in the United Nations system.

4. Units with which significant joint activities are expected during the period 1980-1983

24.15 Significant activities during the period 1980-1983 are expected with:

(a) UNEP on the formulation of guidelines on the concepts, contents and methodologies of environmental statistics and compilation of environmental statistics with the participation of the regional commissions and interested specialized agencies;

(b) ICAO, UNCTAD and the regional commissions on the development of transport statistics;

(c) IMF, IBRD, FAO, the ILO, UNESCO, OECD and the regional commissions on an integrated price statistics programme;

(d) ECLA, ESCAP, ECA, ECE, IBRD, the ILO and other organizations on income distribution and related statistics;

(e) UNDP, UNFPA, IBRD, UNICEF, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the regional commissions and interested specialized agencies in developing and establishing a National Household Survey Capability Programme in developing countries;

(f) Customs Co-operation Council, EEC, CMEA and regional commissions on the international standard classifications;

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(g) ECE and CMEA on the links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Material Balances of the National Economy (MPS);

(h) IBRD, EEC, CMEA and regional commissions on the International Comparison Project;

(i) UNCTAD, IBRD, IMF, GATT, OECD, other international agencies and the regional commissions on further development of international trade statistics;

(j) IBRD, IAEA, EEC, CMEA, OPEC, OECD and regional commissions on energy statistics;

(k) UNICEF, regional commissions and interested specialized agencies on statistics needed to help in the improvement of services for the well-being of children and youth;

(l) UNIDO, UNCTAD, OECD and regional commissions on further development of industrial statistics and preparation of recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Basic Industrial Surveys;

(m) IMF on public sector statistics;

(n) OECD and regional commissions on bringing SNA up to date;

(o) All the major agencies, interested governmental and non-governmental organizations and regional commissions on developing an integrated international statistical programme, developing an integrated programme of technical co-operation in statistics, including statistical data processing, production of a Handbook of Household Surveys and other manuals, production of a second edition of the Directory of International Statistics, further co-ordination of international statistical questionnaires and joint use and exchange of data among international organizations.

C. Allocation of resources to subprogrammes

24.16 The trend in the percentage allocation of resources to subprogrammes is expected to be approximately as shown in the table on the following page.

D. General outline of the programme

24.17 The development of a statistical base for informed decision-making at all levels is necessarily a continuing, evolving process both within individual countries and throughout the world and the international organizations fill an important function in this process. Reliable and timely quantitative information, properly

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Allocation of resources to subprogrammes
(percentage)

Subprogramme	1978-1979			1980-1981			1982-1983		
	Regular budget	Extra-budgetary sources	Total	Regular budget	Extra-budgetary sources	Total	Regular budget	Extra-budgetary sources	Total
1	38	17	37	38	26	36	38	26	36
2	14	17	14	14	11	13	14	11	13
3	5	35	8	6	24	9	6	24	9
4	17	23	18	17	34	20	17	34	20
5	20	2	17	19	1	17	19	1	17
6	6	6	6	6	4	5	6	4	5
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

organized, is an essential ingredient in decision-making at every level. Without statistical information on the current state and past trends of the situations with which they are dealing, planners, policy-makers and administrators of the public sector and of business and labour cannot carry out their functions in an efficient or rational manner. An example is the area of energy. Detailed statistics are needed on reserves, production, trade, consumption and cost of energy commodities, as well as on the relation of energy to the general economy. Increasing concern about energy stems from its widespread impact on the interrelationships of economies. Rising costs and shifting relationships among the prices of different forms of energy have an immediate impact on industrial activity and permeate virtually all other aspects of economies. The search for alternative sources of energy, reorientation of investment and changes in patterns of demand all reflect directly developments in the energy sector. Likewise patterns of world trade and the balance-of-payments positions of exporting and importing countries are affected. On another level, energy is closely related to environmental concerns and information is needed on the environmental impact of the production, transformation and use of commodities and the costs of pollution and its abatement. To study these questions, related data are needed on industry, trade, manpower, income and a host of other areas, and all these data must be sufficiently comparable to permit interrelated analyses. Definitions, classifications and methodologies should be consistent not only among the various parts of the statistical system, but also, as far as possible, over time so as to facilitate analysis of change.

24.18 The procedures, methodologies and technology needed to create the required statistical data base for countries are of general applicability and can be largely transferred, with appropriate adaptations, from one country to another. The activities of the international organizations in the field of statistics can help countries, especially developing countries, to improve their statistical system by offering guidance on the type of information to be collected, the survey design needed to produce reliable data, practical collection procedures, efficient data-processing and editing techniques and the possible range and content of the final statistical output. They can facilitate the transfer of technology by gathering, systematizing and consolidating the methodologies developed throughout the world and then making them available both through preparation of technical materials, such as manuals and classification systems, and through direct assistance and advice.

24.19 Beyond methodology, the international organizations play a unique role in the gathering and dissemination of statistical data on a world-wide basis. Countries are intimately related to one another through their imports and exports, the movement of people, the interdependence of prices, the effects of pollution, the sharing of knowledge and in innumerable other ways. By putting its own data into an international context, each country can obtain perspectives that cannot be obtained in any other way. For such uses, statistical information is needed in internationally standardized, comparable form. It is to each country's

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advantage, for its own internal purposes that such standardization should occur, but it is only the international organizations, working in concert with one another, which can develop the international standards and assist countries, especially developing countries, in their implementation. In doing so, they will of course be contributing to the development of better data for decision-making for international as well as national use.

24.20 The process of development of such international systems, guidelines and standard classifications usually follows a regular pattern. National Governments express their needs for revised or new standards through the Statistical Commission or the regional conferences of statisticians. The first step in responding to such requests is a comparative study of country practices on the basis of which a draft of the new or revised system, guidelines or classification is prepared, if necessary with the assistance of a consultant or on the advice of an expert group. In all cases the drafts are widely circulated for comment or discussion to international and regional meetings of government statisticians (Statistical Commission, regional conferences, regional working groups and so on) to international agencies, the regional commissions and to national statistical offices. A revised version of the document, based on the comments received, is prepared for submission to the Statistical Commission, which may give it final approval and recommend to countries that they adopt the system, guidelines or classification, or indicate that further work is required. After a number of years, systems, guidelines or classifications which have been implemented are brought up to date in the light of experience.

24.21 The specific objectives and outputs of the statistics programme, detailed later, reflect resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and the recommendations of the Statistical Commission and take into account the needs of the regional commissions, specialized agencies and other international bodies, keeping in mind the evolving and interrelated character of the statistical system.

24.22 Among the areas of work, within the existing subprogrammes, which will receive special emphasis during the plan period, the following may be mentioned:

- (i) Energy statistics will be further expanded by the introduction of a global system of integrated energy statistics; the publication of individual country energy balances and of national and international energy data sources; and the provision of guidelines to countries for the compilation of basic energy statistics and over-all energy balances.
- (ii) Shipping statistics will be developed (with extrabudgetary financing) with the collection of data on flow of goods between ports on the basis of available international trade statistics and port of ship's documents.

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- (iii) Price statistics will be expanded with promotion of work in the area of price statistics at the national level and the compilation of general price indexes and indicators of purchasing power within the framework of the expanded international comparison project.
- (iv) Environment statistics will be developed in order to provide the data required to monitor, assess and deal with the urgent questions related to the quality of the environment. This will be done through the preparation of international guidelines, the reorientation of existing series of available data and the compilation and publication of new series of basic statistics. This work will be closely tied in with the ongoing work in the areas of energy and human settlements.
- (v) The fully integrated computer system will be completed and will enable the easy and efficient generation of photocomposed statistical publications and facilitate the provision of data in response to ad hoc statistical queries. Historical series (20 years) will be introduced into selected publications.
- (vi) The organization of national statistical services, which in many developing countries are still ineffectively developed to enable them to provide the necessary co-ordinated statistics, will receive additional attention.
- (vii) Up-to-date guidelines, manuals and classifications will be produced in the areas of national accounts, international trade and social and demographic statistics.

E. Subprogramme narratives

Subprogramme 1: International trade, industry, natural resources and energy

(a) Objective

24.23 The objective of this subprogramme is to provide more comprehensive, reliable and timely statistics on international trade, natural resources, energy, industry, transport and related areas with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

(b) Problem addressed

24.24 To assess and monitor efforts to improve the foreign trade position, to diversify the exports and to raise the foreign trade earnings of developing countries, it is necessary to secure a great deal of information on trade flows, to construct appropriate indices of export and import prices and unit values, to derive

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trade matrices from existing files and to keep under review trends of the terms of trade of countries, especially developing countries. Available statistics require improvement to serve better such purposes and it is necessary to develop more detailed, more reliable and more prompt data on the trade flows of commodities and their related prices, to extend their coverage and to render them more accessible to users. Improvement is also needed in the related field of transport and shipping statistics.

24.25 The widespread concern about energy has brought forward the need for more comprehensive information in that field. While there are adequate data on production, imports and exports of the various energy commodities, there is a great need further to develop and improve the statistics of stockage, consumption, transformation and final end-use. Therefore the compilation of energy balances covering different energy forms and different stages of operation on a national, regional and global scale have to be created. There is also a further need to develop statistics on non-commercial fuels, particularly in view of the need for more comprehensive energy data of developing countries.

24.26 The widespread concern about industrialization and natural resources, has brought forward the need for more reliable and timely information on the performance of the industrial sector and the demand for and supply of primary commodities. There are insufficient statistics on production and capital formation in industry; data on stocks and consumption of selected materials need to be developed further and national, regional and global balances of important primary commodities need to be prepared; because of the emphasis that is being placed on industrialization and living conditions in developing countries, statistics on construction and distributive trades in many of these countries which are at present inadequate should receive urgent attention.

(c) Legislative authority

24.27 The principal authority for these activities is to be found in the reports of the Statistical Commission reports of the seventeenth session (para. 198), 3/ eighteenth session (paras. 98-104) 4/ and nineteenth session (paras. 11-21 and 106-115), 5/

3/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5236).

4/ Ibid., Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5603).

5/ Ibid., Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910).

as well as in General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975.

(d) Strategy and output

24.28 The strategy will consist of the continued preparation of recurrent publications, the addition of a new publication concerning national energy balances, the extension of computer-based data files and the preparation of international guidelines and methodological studies in co-operation with, as appropriate, other divisions of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the regional commissions, UNCTAD, GATT, the Customs Co-operation Council, UNIDO, UNEP, FAO, IBRD, IMF, OECD and other organizations.

24.29 International trade, energy, industrial and related statistics are collected, compiled and disseminated through the following recurrent publications: Commodity Trade Statistics, 6/ Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, World Trade Annual and its Supplement, World Energy Supplies (annual), Yearbook of Industrial Statistics, Yearbook of Construction Statistics, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and Statistical Yearbook. The further extension of the computer-based data files and of microfiches will improve accessibility, include new countries and provide more complete and more timely data for all reporting countries.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.30 A report on foreign trade statistics, which will review country practices and make recommendations for the revision of the publication entitled International Trade Statistics; Concepts and Definitions, will be available. A report will provide the basis for preparing an International Classification of Energy and the consequent adoption of a common unit of measurement of interfuel comparison for use in energy balances on a global scale. This report, Energy Statistics: Current Practices and Future Needs, will be made available for circulation to national and international statistical offices and other appropriate agencies concerned with the field of energy statistics. Also, on the basis of a new international questionnaire on energy statistics (1977) and following the initiation of a publication on country energy balances (1978), a global system of integrated energy statistics will have been set up.

24.31 Besides the recurrent publications on industrial statistics listed above, a compendium presenting the results of the 1973 world programme of industrial statistics will be published. A revised and updated set of international guidelines for industrial statistics will have been prepared.

^{6/} Yearly data are printed; quarterly and yearly data are available on microfiches.

(ii) Biennium 1980-1981

24.32 Work to revise the publication entitled International Trade Statistics, Concepts and Definitions will be undertaken. Work will continue on the systematic collection and publishing of economic statistics on shipping. Work will be initiated on a revision of the publication International Standard Definitions for Transport Statistics.

24.33 An International Classification of Energy will be prepared and an International Handbook of Energy Conversion Factors and Units of Measurement for use in the field of energy balances will be published. Work will be initiated on the development of particular types of new energy statistics for specific purposes: for example, the development of aggregate energy statistics of importance for analysis of environmental impact.

24.34 An important extension of industrial statistics will be the collection of the quantity and value of gross output of selected commodities, of selected materials and fuels consumed in their production and of stocks of selected materials, fuels and finished goods. Detailed studies will be undertaken designed to construct, for major industrial and non-energy commodities, balances of stocks, production, trade and consumption, as well as their prices; compilation and dissemination of index numbers of industrial production, employment and productivity will be undertaken. A new world programme of basic industrial surveys for 1983 will be prepared and a new issue of the Bibliography of Industrial and Distributive Trade Surveys will be published.

(iii) Biennium 1982-1983

24.35 Among non-recurrent work, the major activity to be undertaken during this period will be the revision of the Standard International Trade Classification, following the publication of the Harmonized System by the Customs Co-operation Council.

24.36 Revision of the International Standard Definitions for Transport Statistics will also be completed. Initial work will be completed on a systematic collection of economic statistics of shipping.

24.37 An updated version of the Compendium of National and International Energy Data Sources will be published as a supplement to World Energy Supplies. Guidelines and assistance to interested countries for the compilation of basic energy statistics and overall energy balances will be provided in collaboration with the regional commissions.

24.38 Dissemination of international guidelines for the 1983 World Programme of Basic Industrial Surveys will be completed and efforts will be made to secure the participation in the world programme of as many developing countries as possible.

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- (iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered likely to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.39 There are no activities of marginal usefulness in this subprogramme plan.

(e) Expected impact

24.40 The work described above will lead to a substantial improvement and expansion of the scope and coverage of available statistical data in international trade, energy, transport and industry during the medium-term plan period. In particular it is expected that, during this period, data for developing countries will expand more rapidly than before, thus making available more timely, detailed and comparable data for purposes of policy formulation and planning.

24.41 The adoption by an increasing number of countries of international standards on methods and procedures will contribute to the improvement of national statistics and the collection and dissemination of internationally comparable statistics for use in policy formulation and monitoring.

Subprogramme 2: National accounts income distribution and related statistics

(a) Objective

24.42 The objective of this subprogramme is to develop further and implement the system of national accounts and balances and related systems and classifications and to provide a framework for the integration of economic and social data and more comprehensive and reliable statistics on national accounts and balances and related data, such as the distribution of income and consumption, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

(b) Problems addressed

24.43 Governments need the kinds of information encompassed in the national accounts and the detailed survey and administrative data which underlie them for evaluating economic and social conditions and for use in planning and policy formulation. National accounts data are required, for instance, to enable policy-makers to understand the recent world-wide experience of inflation combined with widespread underutilization of capacity, and to develop policies to combat it. Statistics on the distribution of income, consumption and wealth are essential for analysing issues related to equity. More detailed, more reliable and better organized data on the public sector are required as its role assumes increasing importance.

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24.44 The System of National Accounts (SNA) provides the international standard for work in national economic accounting in countries with market economies, as does the System of Material Balances of the National Economy (MPS) in countries with centrally planned economies. Continuous review and updating are needed to ensure that these systems of national accounts and balances meet the current needs of policy-makers and planners and that countries are able to implement them. In terms of the international reporting of these data, there is need for both extended coverage and more flexible, timely and responsive collection, storage and retrieval.

(c) Legislative authority

24.45 The principal legislative authority is to be found in the reports of the Statistical Commission on its seventeenth session (paras. 85-90 and 195); 3/ eighteenth session (paras. 137, 143 and 149) 4/ and nineteenth session (paras. 23-36, 116-128, 201), 5/ and annex II; and in Economic and Social Council resolution 2074 (LXII) of 13 May 1977.

(d) Strategy and output

24.46 The strategic elements involved in pursuing this objective include the over-all review and updating of the present systems, their supplementation to include new types of data, the further development of standard classification systems and the expansion of data-collection activities.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.47 When SNA was last revised in 1968, it was recognized that the work was incomplete, and a work programme covering a number of years was laid out. By the end of 1979, approximately 25 publications will have been issued, including guidelines and technical manuals in such areas as distribution of income and consumption, national and sector balance sheets, public sector statistics, input-output statistics, flow-of-funds statistics and national accounts in constant prices, as well as various aspects of the relationship between SNA and MPS and work on the required classifications in both the economic and social fields. Explanatory materials and manuals on sources and methods will also have been developed.

24.48 Since the publication of the revised SNA, much experience has been accumulated in its implementation, in both industrialized and developing countries. On the basis of this experience, a thorough review is in process designed to identify problem areas and suggest remedies for them. Particular attention is being devoted to the needs of developing countries, both in terms of their special data requirements and in terms of their need for clear and understandable reference materials. It is expected that this review will have progressed to the point where a longer-term programme of work can be considered. In the field of classifications, initial work on the revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) will have begun.

24.49 A comparative study of national practices on the collection and compilation of income distribution and related statistics is expected to be completed. Information on sources and methods used for national accounts estimation in 80 individual countries will have been prepared for an ad hoc publication. The inclusion in individual country chapters of the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics of summary information on sources and methods used by countries in estimating their national accounts statistics will be initiated.

(ii) Biennium 1980-1981

24.50 During the 1980-1981 biennium, work on the system of national accounts and balances and related data will emphasize (a) integration of the somewhat diverse existing materials, (b) clarification of concepts, definitions, classifications and structures, and (c) supplementation of the systems to meet new needs. Draft proposals relating to these matters will be drawn up and the national accounts questionnaire will be redesigned. A number of technical studies and manuals will be prepared as time and resources allow, in such fields as the uses of national accounts, the integration of environmental data and concepts into the accounts, regional accounts, quarterly accounts and various aspects of valuation and deflation. Work on national and sector balance sheets and wealth accounts will be pursued with particular emphasis on the integration of the stock accounts (balance sheets) with the flow accounts (production, income and flow of funds). Country experience with computerized techniques of national accounts estimation and compilation will be studied with a view to the preparation of a technical manual. The role of the national accounts as a framework for the integration of detailed survey and administrative data in the economic and social fields will be explored, including the questions of statistical methodology this entails. Analytic uses of such integrated economic and social data will be surveyed. For the household sector, emphasis will be placed on the distribution of income and consumption, disaggregation by social and demographic characteristics, and the organization and use of computerized data. For the enterprise sector, the relationships among the concepts of traditional and modern production methods and monetary and non-monetary transactions will be emphasized. For the government sector, relationships among the various levels of central and local governments will be explored. Work will continue on the close co-ordination of SNA and MPS; special attention will be given to the relationship between SNA institutional sectors and the corresponding MPS socio-economic sectors, and to the evaluation of services. In the classification area, the main thrust of the work will be on the step-by-step approach to a combined trade-production commodity classification. To this end, close co-operation with the Harmonized System Committee of the Customs Co-operation Council will be maintained, as well as with EEC, CMEA and other interested organizations.

24.51 The collection of data on national accounts will be expanded, both in terms of coverage, quality and timeliness of the types of

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data now collected and in terms of new kinds of data. Reliability studies will be continued, especially surveys of sources and methods, with a view to improving the quality of the data collected. As it becomes possible, the improved and expanded data will be reflected in the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Yearbook.

24.52 The co-operation with the regional commissions, OECD and various international agencies in collecting and publishing national accounts statistics is expected to be further increased. In the field of income distribution and related statistics, the collection of data will be expanded and data will be compiled and published, as information becomes available, in co-ordination with the specialized agencies and the regional commissions.

(iii) Biennium 1982-1983

24.53 During this biennium, work on the systems of national accounts and related data may be expected to reach the point where up-to-date guidelines and up-to-date sources and methods manuals can be prepared, together with guidelines and manuals on such topics as the distribution of wealth, methods of accounting for inflation, the compilation and use of computerized data, and the integration of survey and administrative data with aggregate national accounting data. The preceding work on methodology should permit an expansion and systematization of data collection in such areas as SNA/MPS comparisons, the distribution of income and consumption, public sector statistics and input-output statistics. In the classification area, this biennium should see the completion of a first draft of the combined trade-production commodity classification.

(iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered likely to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.54 There are no activities of marginal usefulness in this subprogramme plan.

(e) Expected impact

24.55 Although its impact cannot be quantified, the review and updating of SNA and related data and its extension into new areas, together with the specification of its relationship to other areas of statistics, will contribute to a better understanding and monitoring of important economic and social problems. Increased attention to the preparation of methodological and explanatory materials will assist countries in implementing these systems and help them improve the quality and timeliness of their data. International users will be served by an expansion of the data collection programme, which will make additional and new kinds of data available as an integral part of the comprehensive and reliable information base. Better means for the measurement of the

distribution of income and consumption will provide guidance for government policy planners in taking steps to reduce the inequality problems associated with the process of economic development.

Subprogramme 3: Price statistics and related areas

(a) Objective

24.56 This subprogramme's objective is to develop further the methodology and collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on prices and related areas.

(b) Problems addressed

24.57 The world-wide incidence of inflation coupled with lagging output has focused new attention on the problems of price and output behaviour and the relationship between them. The price data now available urgently need strengthening for the detection, monitoring, analysis and projection of inflationary developments and also for the measurement of related changes in output and productivity. They are also inadequate for the detailed comparisons of purchasing power required to establish internationally comparable estimates of real income and product and to replace generally the exchange-rate estimates now widely used for the conversion to a common denominator of national aggregates in national currency terms. A systematic effort is needed to promote price statistics work at the national level and to develop an international price data base to meet contemporary requirements.

(c) Legislative authority

24.58 The principal legislative authority is to be found in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 and the reports of the Statistical Commission on its seventeenth session (paras. 89-195) 3/ and nineteenth session (paras. 3-10, 201 and 202) 5/ and annex II.

(d) Strategy and output

24.59 The main strategic elements involved in pursuing this objective include (i) promotion of work on price statistics at the national level through further development of international recommendations and guidelines on methodology, (ii) expansion and improvement in the collection, compilation and dissemination of various price data, and (iii) compilation of indicators of purchasing power and price levels within the framework of the International Comparison Project and cost-of-living surveys.

24.60 The methodology of price collection, index compilation and deflation will be improved through studies of national practices

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in compiling price and quantity statistics and in preparing national accounts in constant prices and through the formulation of guidelines and the development of manuals.

24.61 The compilation and dissemination of producer and consumer price data and of price indexes for commodity groups, activity classes, categories of final demand and exports and imports will be extended and improved.

24.62 Work on the International Comparison Project will be expanded. This project involves detailed collection under international direction of prices in all areas of final use, and their transformation into indexes of purchasing power. The work of the project makes possible comparisons of prices and purchasing power among countries with a degree of validity not otherwise obtainable.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.63 A number of studies will have been published, including guidelines on price and quantity statistics, a manual on national accounts at constant prices and manuals on sources of data and methodology for compiling indexes of producer prices and prices in international trade and possibly consumer prices.

24.64 Continued improvement will have taken place in the scope and quality of the price data published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Yearbook.

24.65 Work on comparisons for selected countries participating in the International Comparison Project will have been completed and recommendations for the organization and execution of the next round of comprehensive inquiries will have been prepared. Significant progress should have been made with the development, testing and application of a simplified methodology requiring only limited information and with the elaboration of techniques for annual updating of the estimates.

(ii) Biennium 1980-1981

24.66 During this biennium, the general methodological work will be closely related to the national accounts methodology work. The methodology of replacement cost and other forms of current cost accounting will be studied for the preparation of a technical manual. Countries' experiences with indexation will be studied with emphasis on the methodology of constructing appropriate indexes. Techniques of deflation of income shares for various purposes will be studied, including measurement of real income, of labour cost and other components of cost of production and measurement of productivity.

24.67 The collection, compilation and dissemination of price data, now dispersed in different subject-matter areas throughout the international statistical system, will be co-ordinated and

systematized. The primary aim of this activity will be to meet the general analytical requirements of the international community for information of this kind as efficiently and effectively as possible. The work programme in the biennium will include the development of a central facility consisting of (a) an integrated data base, including appropriate software for data transformations, (b) collection and compilation procedures, possibly including new questionnaires for data collection from national sources, and (c) channels for data dissemination.

24.68 A major effort will be made to expand the International Comparison Project to a world-wide programme of inquiries. An important role in the international effort will be assigned to the regional commissions. Special programmes will be developed and instituted and facilities will be provided to enable the developing countries to participate fully in this work and to strengthen their capability in related fields, such as national accounting and price collection and compilation.

(iii) Biennium 1982-1983

24.69 On the basis of the work done in the previous biennium, technical manuals will be prepared in the areas noted. Efforts will be directed to the improvement of procedures for the collection, compilation and dissemination of price data through the systematic application of computer methods. Continuing attention will be given to improving the scope, quality and relevance of the data compiled. The compilation of the price and expenditure data collected through the inquiries of the International Comparison Project will be completed and a report prepared containing comparative estimates of prices and purchasing power for all participating countries. National price and quantity indicators will be applied to bring the estimates up to date on an annual basis.

(iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered likely to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.70 There are no activities of marginal usefulness in this subprogramme plan.

(e) Expected impact

24.71 The expanded collection, compilation and dissemination of data will make available new information for detecting, monitoring, analysing and projecting changes in prices, for measuring their interrelationships and their effects upon the distribution of income and the level of output and for assessing generally the differing impact of the inflationary process upon different countries and different groups or regions within countries. The work on the International Comparison Project will advance understanding of real income levels and price structures and their relationship to levels of consumption, capital formation, government spending and external trade.

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Subprogramme 4: Social and demographic statistics

(a) Objective

24.72 This subprogramme's objective is to develop further, systematize, integrate and disseminate statistics in the social, demographic and environmental areas with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

(b) Problems addressed

24.73 In recognition of the growing concern with issues related to the quality of life and social equity, continuing efforts are needed to improve social, demographic and environmental statistics, which have tended to develop in a more piecemeal manner than economic statistics, where the national accounts have exerted an integrating influence for some time. Efforts by national statistical agencies to improve these statistics are often handicapped by a lack of authoritative and relevant information about the experience of other countries making similar efforts.

24.74 Relatively little work has been done in the complex and wide-ranging field of environmental statistics. Governments and international organizations are in need of statistics of the environmental aspects, including human settlements, of the supplies of and demand for replaceable and irreplaceable natural resources, of the pollutants and wastes generated and of the quality of environmental media to monitor, assess and deal with those urgent questions.

(c) Legislative authority

24.75 The principal authority for the activities of this subprogramme is to be found in Economic and Social Council resolutions 1307 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, 1564 (L) of 30 April 1971, 1947 (LVIII) of 7 May 1975 and 2055 (LXII) of 5 May 1977, as well as the report of the Statistical Commission on its nineteenth session (paras. 37-115 and 162-174). 5/

(d) Strategy and output

24.76 The improvement and better integration of social, demographic and related economic statistics and the development of environmental statistics is a long-term process requiring the continuing attention of both the users and producers of these statistics, depending primarily on national efforts. Nevertheless, work at the international level and its outputs contribute significantly to this process. International recommendations and guidelines for social and demographic statistics, by providing specific examples of properly integrated statistical concepts, classifications and methods, stimulate the producers and users of statistics in individual countries to re-examine the procedures they use with a view to

improving them. Since international recommendations are based on a distillation of national practices and experience throughout the world, such recommendations are properly seen as a vehicle for transferring knowledge and technology between countries, with special benefit to those countries with less developed statistical systems. A concrete instance of transfer of technology is the continuing publication of the Sample Surveys of Current Interest.

24.77 With the assistance of UNICEF, work will continue to improve the availability, timeliness, quality and use of demographic, social and related economic statistics, with special attention to statistics needed to help in the improvement of services for the well-being of children and youth.

24.78 The collection, compilation and dissemination of demographic statistics through the Demographic Yearbook and the Population and Vital Statistics Report, Series A (quarterly), the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Yearbook, as well as the further development of the capacity to respond in a timely and cost-effective manner to ad hoc or highly specialized requests, will be continued during the whole medium-term plan period.

24.79 In the field of environment statistics, work will focus on the conceptual and methodological problems of collection and compilation of such statistics by countries and on the compilation of data. The programme is designed to provide the basis for continuing international guidance and assistance to countries in developing statistics of environment, as well as reporting, compilation and publication of internationally comparable data.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

a. Integration and improvement of social statistics

24.80 Documents providing basic guidance to countries on the integration and improvement of social, demographic and related economic statistics for policy and programme administration uses will have been published, including documents for use by countries at different stages of development, especially the least developed among the developing countries. For example, a technical report dealing with the conceptual and practical problems of integrating and improving social statistics in developing countries and a related document providing guidelines on social indicators and illustrative series will have been issued.

b. Demographic statistics methods

24.81 The recommendations for the 1980 world population and housing census programme, together with various technical handbooks and reports, will provide national census authorities with up-to-date guidance on over-all census management and specific aspects of census operations and content. Work on preparing the draft on the revised Handbook of Vital Statistics should be substantially completed. The

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Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration will have been published.

c. Methodology and compilation of social and housing statistics

24.82 Work on the revised Handbook of Household Surveys will have been substantially completed. This Handbook is designed to provide direct technical guidance to statisticians in developing countries in planning and carrying out household sample surveys as part of the Compendium of Housing Statistics and the Compendium of Social Statistics, each of which is designed to provide large bodies of intersectoral and distributional data in their respective fields, will have been prepared as part of the recurrent publications programme.

d. Environment statistics

24.83 A progress report on the results of a survey on country practices in the field of environment statistics with special reference to the developing countries will be completed. Two or three pilot case studies in countries at different levels of development will have been initiated to test the usefulness and practicability of guidelines on concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies.

(ii) The 1980-1981 biennium

a. Integration and improvement of social statistics

24.84 Specific subject-matter fields not covered by existing statistical activities of the United Nations system will be further analysed within the framework for the integration of social, demographic and related economic statistics. For example, in co-operation with the Centre for Social and Humanitarian Affairs and other organizations, national practices on collection and compilation of statistics on crime and criminal justice will be examined and appropriate technical reports prepared. Technical reports or draft recommendations will be prepared on related topics, such as privacy and confidentiality issues of the collection and integration of social statistics; statistical classifications of special relevance to social statistics, including age group classifications. The integration and improvement of social, demographic and related economic statistics at the national, regional and international levels will be monitored with a view to assisting countries in employing the most applicable techniques for the collection, processing and compilation of these statistics.

24.85 A technical report on the collection and compilation of statistics on use of time will be prepared and published to provide interested countries guidance on a promising methodology

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for use particularly in connexion with rural development programmes and the study of participation of women in development.

b. Demographic statistics methods

24.86 In close collaboration with the Population Division, the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, the regional commissions and regional statistical training institutes, instruction materials needed in the field of population and housing census methods will be developed and additional technical manuals on census methods to incorporate new technical developments and further experience of countries will be prepared. Work on the feasibility of adopting existing technical manuals to a "self-study" format to facilitate their use by national statistical personnel in developing countries will be initiated. The revised Handbook of Vital Statistics will be completed through the organization of an interregional workshop on methods for improving the collection of vital statistics by means of civil registration systems. In collaboration with the Outer Space Affairs Division, an interregional workshop will be convened to examine the potential uses of remote sensing technology in population and housing census and related statistical work. Work will continue on the improvement of international migration statistics.

c. Methodology and compilation of social and housing statistics

24.87 The Handbook of Household Surveys will be published. The Compendium of Housing Statistics, 1980 will be published. Work on the fourth edition of the Compendium of Social Statistics will be initiated with a further emphasis on the presentation of data needed to examine questions of social equity. Further studies of national practices in social statistics will be undertaken, followed by the development of appropriate guidelines.

d. Environment statistics

24.88 Following internal assessment (UNEP/UNSO) of pilot case studies, preliminary draft guidelines containing integrated concepts, definitions and classifications for the tabulation and analysis of statistics on the environment will be prepared, including statistics needed for monitoring the economic, demographic and social determinants and consequences of environmental change together with related guidelines on sources and methods of data collection.

(iii) The 1982-1983 biennium

a. Integration and improvement of social statistics

24.89 Recommendations on standard age group classifications will be published and further work on statistical classifications

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required to make social statistics more responsive to needs for improved and more integrated data on basic social policy issues, for example, urban/rural classifications, socio/economic classifications and poverty classifications, will be undertaken. Studies of national practices to ensure that existing international recommendations and guidelines continue to meet the needs of countries, particularly developing countries, will be undertaken.

b. Methodology and compilation of social and housing statistics

24.90 The fourth issue of the Compendium of Social Statistics will be published. Technical reports on improved methods of compiling and disseminating integrated social statistics will be prepared. Studies of national practices in the collection and use of housing statistics and social statistics, including such topics as methods of ensuring user participation in planning social statistics activities will be undertaken. Participation in training activities will be continued.

c. Environment statistics

24.91 Continuing work will focus on (a) improving the draft international guidelines on statistics of the environment; (b) promoting and assisting countries to gather, issue and use statistics of the environment; and (c) expanding the international collection compilation and publication of new and improved statistics of the environment, in step with national and international developments.

(iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered likely to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.92 There are no activities of marginal usefulness in this subprogramme plan.

(e) Expected impact

24.93 Those outputs related to the compilation and dissemination of demographic, social and housing statistics are designed to meet the evolving needs of Governments, international agencies, research workers, academic institutions, enterprises and labour throughout the world, and of the United Nations Secretariat for authoritative, timely and carefully compiled statistics needed to assess national goals for social and economic development within the context of the new international economic order.

24.94 A wide range of environmental statistics will provide an important tool to countries and the international community to monitor, assess and interpret the environmental conditions and to deal with the related problems.

Subprogramme 5: Improved dissemination of statistics

(a) Objective

24.95 The objective of this subprogramme is to improve the variety, timeliness and quality of the statistical data disseminated by the United Nations, including general statistical compendia and special tabulations, and to give them wider distribution.

(b) Problems addressed

24.96 With the growing scope, complexity and interdependence of global socio-economic systems, the demand for comprehensive, reliable and timely international statistics for policy-makers and planners has been growing. To meet this demand, including the demand for special-purpose tabulations and analytical cross-classifications in machine-readable form, improvements are needed in the basic files and procedures of the Statistical Office and a redesign of computer systems is required to enable the latest techniques to be employed.

24.97 The main problems with existing systems stem from the fact that the data files and computer programmes of the Statistical Office were structured separately to produce specific publications and did not allow fast and efficient retrieval to meet special requests. In addition, some statistical publications are still produced manually or are only partly computerized. The existing file structures and methods also hamper the full interchange and joint use of machine-readable data between statistical agencies and the Statistical Office. Finally, it is felt that the sales of Statistical Office publications are below their potential. Efforts are required to expand further their sales and general dissemination.

(c) Legislative authority

24.98 The principal authority for these activities is to be found in the reports of the seventeenth session (para. 42), 3/ eighteenth session (paras. 28-32) (paras. 105-108) 4/ and nineteenth session (para. 201) 5/ of the Statistical Commission.

(d) Strategy and output

24.99 The following strategy elements will be involved in reaching this objective. Regular review of the Statistical Office publications and assessment of the quality of the data therein, with a view to improving their usefulness and the efficiency of their production. Better co-ordination of the contents of the Statistical Office publications with those of the regional commissions and the specialized agencies. The continued compilation and dissemination of international statistical series in the

Statistical Yearbook, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and Statistical Pocketbook (World Statistics in Brief). In co-operation with the Department of Conference Services, expansion of the dissemination of statistical publications.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.100 An integrated system of managing statistical data in a computerized data base, using standardized coding systems for international statistics will be implemented with all basic features. Storage of and managing selected data in the data base, especially those required for the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, the Statistical Yearbook and the Demographic "Series A" publications will have been implemented. Wider use of photocomposition will be made in preparation of statistical publications. Co-ordination of machine-readable statistics with regional commissions and with other divisions in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs will have improved, including the development of definitions of content, data structures and processing facilities.

(ii) The 1980-1981 biennium

24.101 Selected improvements in the publications of the Statistical Office will be introduced. The integrated computer system will be extended and an ad hoc query-processing facility enabling rapid access to selected statistics through terminals will be implemented. The amount of statistical office data available through the integrated computer system will be greatly expanded. The use of photocomposition will be further improved and graphical output will be introduced in the implementation of the publications. Techniques for centralized co-ordination of data definitions, statistical standards and data management will be introduced.

24.102 Implementation of facilities to enable the easy and quick exchange of data between the data bank of the Statistical Office and the computer systems of the regional commissions and other offices in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs will be implemented. Data transmission via the United Nations communication network will be evaluated.

(iii) The 1982-1983 biennium

24.103 The fully integrated computer system and a generalized system enabling the easy and efficient generation of photocomposed statistical publications will be completed. The facility for responses to ad hoc statistical queries will be further improved. Historical series (20 years) will be introduced into selected publications. Direct access to the statistical data bank by the regional economic commissions and other divisions in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs will be

provided. A further edition of the Supplement to the Statistical Yearbook and Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, containing updated definitions of statistical series will be published.

- (iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered likely to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.104 There are no activities of marginal usefulness in this subprogramme plan.

- (e) Expected impact

24.105 More effective and efficient servicing of user needs through both the regular publications and special tabulations will be achieved through the above actions. In particular, statistical data will be made available more quickly, the data will be more comprehensive and reliable, special requests will be satisfied more efficiently, interchange and joint use of data will be improved and duplication avoided. Fuller use will be made of available statistical material. It is expected that the improvement in the publications and the promotional activity will be reflected in an expanded sale of statistical publications.

Subprogramme 6: Co-ordination of international statistical programmes

- (a) Objective

24.106 The objective is to promote co-ordination of the international statistical system, including technical co-operation activities, and to provide statistical services to other units within the Secretariat and to other United Nations bodies. The Statistical Office serves as a focal point for the international statistical system.

- (b) Problem addressed

24.107 Because of the decentralized nature of the international statistical system and the limited amount of resources available for statistical activities, special efforts must be made to promote a co-ordinated and integrated statistical programme for the United Nations system. There is also a need to extend and broaden further co-ordination and integration of programmes to include governmental and non-governmental organizations which carry out important activities in statistics. Further, the supply of statistical data by the national statistical offices to the United Nations system and other international organizations places a continuous burden on countries and needs to be subject to systematic review. As new areas of statistics obtain greater emphasis, appropriate co-ordination with relevant agencies has to be developed.

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24.108 Despite the substantial efforts made in the past, there is still inadequate consistency in concepts, definitions and classifications, while areas such as price and income distribution statistics are insufficiently developed and co-ordinated. Special attention needs to be given to co-ordination of the evolving work in new areas, such as environment statistics. The organization of statistical services in many developing countries is insufficiently developed to enable them to provide the necessary co-ordinated statistics.

(c) Legislative authority

24.109 The principal authority for these activities is to be found in Economic and Social Council resolutions 8 (I) of 16 February 1946, as amended by 8 (II) of 21 June 1946, 1306 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, and 1566 (L) of 3 May 1971, and General Assembly resolution 238 A (III) of 18 November 1948.

(d) Strategy and output

24.110 The strategy elements involved in reaching this objective include technical and substantive servicing of the Statistical Commission, the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination and the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities and implementation of decisions made at meetings of these bodies. Close liaison will be maintained with the statistical services of the regional commissions, specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and national statistical services through the preparation and review of publications and reports and participation in meetings designed to develop co-ordinated actions.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.111 By the end of 1979, documents will have been prepared for the twentieth session of the Statistical Commissions, the twelfth and thirteenth sessions of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities, the meetings of the Committee on Contributions and in response to ad hoc requests from other United Nations bodies. Additional actions will have been taken with the regional commissions, specialized agencies etc., relating to co-ordination of questionnaires and the joint use of data by the international statistical system, and further steps will have been taken on co-ordinating particular substantive areas of statistics like environment, tourism, income distribution, prices and the development of a National Household Survey Capability in interested countries. A revised Handbook of Statistical Organization will have been published and distributed widely, especially to developing countries and a second edition of the Directory of International Statistics will have been published.

(ii) Biennium of 1980-1981

24.112 The following activities will be undertaken:

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(a) Continued technical and substantive servicing of the Statistical Commission and the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities and implementation of decisions made at these meetings.

(b) Continued maintenance of close relationships between regional commissions, specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and national statistical services through attendance at meetings and preparation and review of reports on matters like questionnaires, data banks and exchange of data, and concepts, definitions and classifications in use.

(c) Maintenance, updating and expansion of the Directory of International Statistics

(d) Preparation and improvement of reports of integrated five-year plans of (i) the regular and (ii) technical co-operation activities of the international statistical system.

(e) Continuation of interagency efforts to enhance the comparability, consistency and usefulness of international statistics.

(f) Continued provision of statistical services to the General Assembly organs and other bodies on request, including the provision of data on national income, exchange rates, population, etc., to the Committee on Contributions and the provision of substantive services and statistical expertise to various units of the Secretariat or other United Nations bodies.

(g) Preparation of a number of booklets on organizational matters, such as arrangements for the identification and evaluation of users' needs, effective methods of disseminating data, reduction of burden on respondents and safeguarding confidentiality.

(iii) Biennium of 1982-1983

24.113 Servicing of the meetings of the Statistical Commission and the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities will continue. The emphasis in co-ordination with the regional commissions, specialized agencies etc. will shift away from the supportive areas (co-ordination of questionnaires, data banks and exchange of information etc.) towards more concentration on substantive areas. The work of providing statistical data and guidance on statistical techniques to a number of United Nations organs, including the servicing of the Committee on Contributions, will continue during this biennium. Additional studies will be carried out on various aspects of the organization of national statistical services and the results widely distributed for application in developing countries. The third edition of the Directory of International Statistics will be published.

- (iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered likely to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.114 There are no activities of marginal usefulness in this subprogramme plan.

(e) Expected impact

24.115 Greater efficiency and co-ordination of international statistical activities and improved integration and consistency of statistical programmes and their outputs will result. This and the strengthening of statistical organization at the national levels will be conducive to improving the quality of the services of national statistical offices. Co-ordination of questionnaires will reduce the burden placed on national statistical services.

PROGRAMME 2: DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL
CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

A. Organization

1. Intergovernmental review

24.116 The work of the Secretariat in this programme is reviewed by the Statistical Commission, which meets every two years. The last meeting of the Commission was in November 1976 and the next will be in February 1979. It is also reviewed by the Governing Council of UNDP, which met in June 1978 and which meets twice a year. This plan has been derived from decisions taken by these bodies, but has not been approved by them.

2. Secretariat

24.117 In view of the integrated nature of the activities in this programme and its role in servicing the economic and social sectors, the resources of the Statistical Office were not redeployed. As at 1 July 1978, 12 Professional posts from overhead resources, as well as two outposted interregional advisers under the regular programme of technical co-operation, were retained in the Statistical Office, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, and its services for substantive research for technical co-operation and for technical assistance activities are being made available to the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development on request. This arrangement will be reviewed at the end of a year to determine whether any changes are required.

3. Divergences between current administrative structure and proposed programme structure

24.118 Prior to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, the Statistical Office provided substantive support for technical co-operation activities in the field of statistics, whereas programme co-ordination and management and other support activities were the responsibility of the Office of Technical Co-operation and other units of the Secretariat. The Office of Technical Co-operation now forms part of the new Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, which also includes the other supporting services (Technical Assistance Recruitment Service, part of the Purchase and Transportation Service and part of the Departmental Administration and Finance Services). In addition to the substantive support now being provided by the Statistical Office, proportionate activities of the programme co-ordination and management staff and the support service staff are required for the execution of technical co-operation programmes. At the time this plan was prepared, the organization of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development was not final. The provisional arrangements with the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs for collaboration between the two departments will be reviewed in 1979.

4. Expected completions

24.119 The programme of technical co-operation is of a continuing nature and whereas specific projects, whether in individual countries or in groups of countries, may be completed in the course of the plan period, the activities as such in all aspects of statistics for which the United Nations is responsible will continue in each of the bienniums 1980-1981 and 1982-1983.

B. Co-ordination

1. Formal co-ordination within the Secretariat

24.120 The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development will collaborate closely with the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs in carrying out technical co-operation activities in the field of statistics.

24.121 The co-operation between the Statistical Office and the regional commissions, described in paragraphs 24.7 to 24.10 above, includes arrangements for transfer of substantive support for regional technical co-operation activities wherever appropriate.

2. Formal co-ordination within the United Nations system

24.122 The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development

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and the Statistical Office will continue to exchange information and to co-ordinate their activities with other organizations of the United Nations system, as described in paragraphs 24.11 to 24.15 above.

C. Allocation of resources to subprogrammes

24.123 The trend in the percentage allocation of resources to subprogrammes 1 and 2 is expected to be approximately as shown in the table on the following page.

24.124 Since the activities undertaken under this programme are of a continuing nature, the allocation of the resources to subprogrammes over the period 1978-1983 is not expected to vary significantly from year to year.

D. Subprogramme narratives

Subprogramme 1: Improvement of statistical capabilities of developing countries

(a) Objective

24.125 The objective of this subprogramme is to assist developing countries through direct advisory services and technical co-operation activities to develop further their statistical capability and the statistics they need for monitoring and directing their economic and social development.

(b) Problems addressed

24.126 In many developing countries, the capabilities of the statistical system are still limited and do not provide adequate information for policy-makers, administrators or planners at either the national or international levels, in particular with respect to vital statistics, national accounting and industrial surveys. Aside from weakness in the capability for collection of statistics, there are also problems of processing, analysing and disseminating such statistics. The statistics that become available are tardy, reducing their usefulness for policy and planning purposes.

(c) Legislative authority

24.127 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives principally from Economic and Social Council resolutions 1566 (L) of 3 May 1971 and 1947 (LVIII) of 7 May 1975; the African Census Programme (E/CN.14/496); General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975; and reports of the Statistical Commission on its eighteenth session (para. 55) 4/ and nineteenth session (paras. 143-174). 5/

(d) Strategy and output

24.128 The strategy for supporting technical co-operation activities, developed with the guidance of the Statistical Commission and in co-ordination with related technical co-operation activities of the regional commissions and specialized agencies, draws on various elements of the statistical programme and on the total know-how and experience available in the Statistical Office. Technical co-operation activities under this subprogramme are designed to assist developing countries to establish, develop and organize their statistical services so as to provide the capability necessary to obtain data required by planners, policy-makers, administrators and other users through the transfer of available statistical knowledge and techniques. Training activities are conducted through seminars, workshops, training institutes, technical meetings, assignment of statistical specialists to countries, individually or in teams, and the preparation and dissemination of manuals in various subject-matter areas, such as national accounts, income distribution, prices, energy, trade, industry, social, demographic and environment statistics. It is anticipated that, during the medium-term period, rather than or in addition to individual expert assignments, the tendency in recent years for some countries to prefer integrated statistical projects involving multidisciplinary teams of experts will continue.

(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.129 By the end of 1979, technical co-operation activities will be under way in some 58 developing countries and the level of assistance will have reached approximately \$US 30 million and comprise, inter alia, expert assistance of the order of 300 work years and fellowship and group training activities estimated at 150 training years.

(ii) Period 1980-1983

24.130 It is expected that there will be a considerable increase in the number of country projects in various fields during the entire medium-term plan period, including projects related to population, housing and industrial censuses, and civil registration and vital statistics. In the field of national household surveys, technical co-operation will be provided through the regional commissions.

(iii) Activities in the strategy that are considered to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.131 The activities undertaken are of a continuing nature and are responses to government requests which are expected to increase during the plan period.

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(e) Expected impact

24.132 It is expected that the strategy envisaged and corresponding outputs will have the following impact: creation of stronger statistical services with cores of efficient statisticians in developing countries; extension of the range of available statistics required for developmental and other purposes and their timely dissemination; the availability of a strong and experienced field survey capability for securing the required data in an organized and systematic manner; the availability of meaningful series of statistical indicators of various facets of the economy and society, such indicators being useful pointers to the economy's behaviour and social development.

Subprogramme 2: Improvement of statistical data-processing capabilities of developing countries

(a) Objective

24.133 The objective of this subprogramme is to assist developing countries, through advisory and technical co-operation activities, to improve their computer data-processing capabilities so as to enable them to apply up-to-date technology effectively for processing statistical data required for their economic and social development.

(b) Problem addressed

24.134 There is a growing and largely unmet demand by developing countries for more modern and more easily used computer technology for processing statistical data required for policy-making and economic and social development purposes. Modern computer data-processing technology needs to be made more broadly available and better employed in developing countries to serve these purposes.

(c) Legislative authority

24.135 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives principally from Economic and Social Council resolutions 1566 (L) of 3 May 1971, 1903 (LVII) of resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975.

(d) Strategy and output

24.136 The strategy consists of assisting developing countries to develop capabilities for effective utilization of statistical computer-processing technology including the utilization of simple computer packaged techniques to process statistical data developed in the Statistical Office and elsewhere.

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(i) Situation at the end of 1979

24.137 Substantive support to technical co-operation projects in statistical data processing using computer technology will have been improved. Statistical data-processing software will have been installed with the assistance of the United Nations in at least 20 developing countries; work will be under way on a series of statistical data-processing and information system manuals, with special attention to computer support of census and survey data processing and assistance to users of such statistics for planning and administration of economic and social development.

(ii) Biennium 1980-1981

24.138 Support to technical co-operation projects in this field will continue, with both expert and training components of projects reflecting growing reliance on computer technical co-operation among developing countries. Increasing emphasis will be placed on training and demonstration in the use of software and up-to-date methodology. Statistical data-processing software will have been installed in some 50 countries, and it is expected that the first two statistical data-processing and information systems manuals will have been published and distributed to various government departments of all Member States.

(iii) Biennium 1982-1983

24.139 Activities under way in the 1980-1981 biennium will continue with a larger number of computer data-processing technical co-operation projects, but a stabilizing level of total financial support because of shorter project durations, use of less expensive equipment and more specialized project objectives, resulting from increased awareness and sophistication in application of computer technology for development. Software and methodology will continue to be developed and distributed with special attention to statistical information systems capable of exploiting the increasing quantity and quality of statistical information becoming available in computer machine-readable form.

(iv) Activities in the strategy that are considered to be of marginal usefulness and the legislation requiring them

24.140 The activities undertaken are of a continuing nature and are in response to requests of Governments which are likely to continue and increase during the plan period.

(e) Expected impact

24.141 Statistical data-processing software will have been installed and used in many of the developing countries of all regions and a series of statistical data processing and information system manuals will have been published and distributed to all Member States. The statistical processing capability of developing countries will be improved and strengthened.