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WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL PROGRAMMES AND CO-ORDINATION

Report of the eighth session

SUMMARY

At its eighth session, the Working Group discussed item by item the provisional agenda for the twenty-first session of the Statistical Commission (paras. 4-48), statistical data collection activities and the co-ordination of statistical questionnaires (paras. 49-57), the progress of the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) since the twentieth session of the Commission (paras. 58-62), proposals for the preparation of a Commission document on international technical co-operation in statistics (paras. 63-65), proposed definitions of several terms for use by the Commission and the translations of those terms into other languages (paras. 66-68), other business (para. 69) and the date and place of the ninth session of the Working Group (para. 70). The annex contains the agenda for the eighth session.

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	3
I. AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION	4 - 48	3
II. STATISTICAL QUESTIONNAIRES	49 - 57	13
III. NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CAPABILITY PROGRAMME (NHSCP) .	58 - 62	15
IV. INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION IN STATISTICS, 1976-1985	63 - 65	16
V. PROPOSED TERMINOLOGY FOR USE BY THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION	66 - 68	16
VI. OTHER BUSINESS	69	17
VII. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NINTH SESSION	70	17
<u>Annex</u>		
AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTH SESSION		19

INTRODUCTION

1. The eighth session of the Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination was held on 29 and 30 October 1979 at Geneva. The agenda, as adopted, is contained in the annex to the present report.
2. Pursuant to the decision of the Working Group at its earlier sessions, the officers of the Commission who attended served as officers of the Working Group with Mr. M. A. Korolev (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) acting as Chairman of the session. Other members present were: Mr. K. C. Seal (India), Mr. T. P. Linehan (Ireland), Mr. Parmeet Singh (Kenya) and Mr. J. W. Duncan (United States of America).
3. The following United Nations organizations and other organizations were represented: the United Nations Statistical Office, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

I. AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE
STATISTICAL COMMISSION

4. The Working Group was informed that the Economic and Social Council had decided that the twenty-first session of the Statistical Commission should take place at United Nations Headquarters from Tuesday, 17 February, through Thursday, 26 February 1981. This was in accordance with Council decision 1979/81 of 3 August 1979 that the sessions of the functional commissions of the Council (of which the Statistical Commission is one) "should normally have a duration of not more than eight working days".
5. A review of the draft provision^a agenda for the twenty-first session was undertaken in accordance with the suggestion of the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session 1/. The Working Group found the agenda extremely heavy in view of the limited number of days available for the session. It, therefore, reviewed the agenda with a view to making it more manageable and deleted several agenda items (see paras. 13, 34 and 39).
6. In the light of new substantive issues at the national as well as the international level, reflecting changing requirements for statistical information

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 248.

the Working Group suggested that the Statistical Commission might wish to review its objectives, priorities and methods of operation.

7. For each of the substantive items on the draft provisional agenda, the Director of the United Nations Statistical Office indicated the documentation that would be prepared, as set forth below. 2/

A. Industrial, energy, transport and international trade statistics

1. Industrial statistics

8. A document containing "Draft international recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics" will be presented to the Commission. This will be based on a consultant's report that has already been completed. The document for the Commission will consist of the general statistical objectives (content) of the Programme and a manual on the organization and conduct of industrial censuses. The first draft will be sent for comments to the regional commissions, UNIDO, the World Bank and a number of individual experts. In response to the request made by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session, the regional commissions will be encouraged to organize workshops for the Programme. 3/

2. Energy statistics

9. A progress report will be submitted to the Commission, outlining the level of achievement in relation to the tasks recommended by the Commission at its twentieth session. It will cover current work in the development of energy balances, co-operation and co-ordination in exchange of data and continued work on definitions, classifications and measurement. The report will review the publications of the Statistical Office containing energy statistics and will outline the changes planned in publishing energy statistics.

10. The Working Group was informed of the plan to combine a consultant's report on classifications and measurement and an "International handbook of conversion factors and units" in a single document, which would then be circulated, as requested by the Commission, to national and international statistical offices and other appropriate agencies. 4/

3. Transport statistics

11. In the draft provisional agenda adopted by the Statistical Commission at the twentieth session, two progress reports were mentioned under this item, one on shipping statistics and the other on other areas of transport statistics.

2/ Unless otherwise indicated, the Working Group endorsed the proposals made for each agenda item.

3/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 13 (b) (ii).

4/ Ibid., para. 23 (b) (ii) and (iii).

12. The Working Group was informed that several countries had reported to the Statistical Office that they had reviewed the uniform system of collecting economic statistics of shipping; others had already started to introduce the framework of the systems. Considerable progress has been made on up-dating the Results of a Pilot Study in Maritime Transport for the years 1966-1968. ^{5/} and the results are expected to be available around June 1980. In the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific region, significant progress in implementing the uniform system has been made as reflected at the second workshop held at Bangkok in April 1979. The Working Group was also informed that further development, especially promotional work on the uniform system, would depend particularly on obtaining additional funding for the shipping project. A prospectus for this purpose was being prepared. Work is progressing on a manual on the implementation of the uniform system. The progress report for the Commission would cover progress made in the above-mentioned fields.

13. The Working Group was informed that resources for work on other areas of transport statistics have been limited to date and are expected to remain limited through 1981. Consequently, significant progress could not be promised. The Working Group decided that the document on other areas of transport statistics should be deleted from the agenda.

4. International trade statistics

14. A document containing proposals for the revision of the concepts and definitions used in international trade statistics will be submitted to the Commission. A draft has already been prepared, taking account of the comments made by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session. It has the same basic structure and contents as the present publication on concepts and definitions ^{6/} but with a number of important changes. The draft will be finalized by February 1980 and submitted to an expert group which will be convened in March or April 1980. The expert group is intended to have 10 to 12 participants to be comprised of six from developing countries and six from developed countries and every effort will be made to ensure an appropriate regional balance. The following international organizations will also be invited to participate: UNCTAD, FAO, IMF, the World Bank, GATT, OECD, EEC, and the Customs Co-operation Council.

B. National accounts and balances

1. System of National Accounts (SNA)

15. Two reports will be prepared under this agenda item. The first one will contain proposals for further development of SNA and the second one will be a report on the relation of the revised SNA to the IMF's Balance of Payments Manual, 4th edition.

^{5/} United Nations publication; Sales No. E.76.XVII.9.

^{6/} International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.XVII.16).

16. A draft is being prepared concerning the future development of SNA for discussion by an expert group that will be convened in April 1980. The document deals with issues relating to non-market activities, definition, classification etc. of market transactions and SNA as a framework for the broader statistical system. In addition to the expert group, this matter will be discussed by a working party of the Conference of European Statisticians and in OECD. The nature of the document presented to the Statistical Commission depends upon these discussions and the expert group. The draft is expected to be available by the end of December 1979.

17. The Working Group was informed that a draft revision of the national accounts questionnaire had been prepared. The draft had been distributed for comment to the regional commissions and would be distributed soon to selected countries. So far the tables are blank, but numbers will be incorporated in order to demonstrate that the revision is largely a rearrangement of the existing questionnaire. OECD expects to have its ad hoc committee consider it early in 1980. By then, the Statistical Office hopes to supply each country with a pre-filled version with its own data.

18. The second document will concern the possibility of moving SNA and the treatment of the balance of payments by the International Monetary Fund closer together. It will identify the nature and statistical importance of existing differences and consider whether the differences are important for the national accounting types of use of the data. The document will be based on a consultant's report on sources and methodology for compiling the foreign sector of the national accounts. The expert group on SNA will review the document since the group is scheduled to consider up-dates, clarifications and modifications in the light of country experience and this particular question falls into that category. The consultant's report is expected in March 1980 and the first draft of the document should be available shortly thereafter. The final report will be prepared after the expert group has met.

2. Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS)

19. The draft provisional agenda included under this item a report on the treatment of capital in SNA and MPS. A document has been prepared on the conceptual differences between the capital formation flows in SNA and MPS, but it now appears that distinctions between the two systems in this area are not as significant as had been anticipated and that the report does not contain much that is new. It was therefore proposed that the findings on this subject could be presented to the Commission as part of a more comprehensive and wide-ranging comparison. The proposed document would provide a wider, more conceptual approach to SNA/MPS comparisons. It would be a progress report on the thinking of the Statistical Office in this field. The Office would be asking the Statistical Commission for support to proceed further and for guidance on areas on which to concentrate. The document would include a brief description of the areas in which work on SNA/MPS links had been carried out and the results attained, as well as proposals for further elaboration of the framework of the SNA/MPS comparisons,

methods of processing primary data needed for intersystem comparisons, application of the System of Indicators of Non-material Services (SINS) for intersystem comparisons and progress in reviewing national practices. The Working Group agreed that such a report should be presented to the Commission.

20. The point was made that a basic explanatory text on SNA/MPS comparisons would be very useful. Such a text should show for a particular or hypothetical country the major steps that have to be taken to convert SNA data into MPS and vice versa.

C. International Comparison Project (ICP)

21. The document for the Commission will report on the developments in ICP in relation to the main plans for the 1979-1984 period, which were endorsed by the Statistical Commission at the twentieth session. ^{7/} It is hoped that ~~you~~ outline of the results of the phase three comparisons will be available in March or April 1980. The plans are being carried out through full-scale surveys and other methods. Full-scale surveys have been undertaken in Central American countries and are now being carried out in other Latin American countries. The Working Group was informed that a first draft of a manual for the participating countries would be completed during the first quarter of 1980. The Statistical Office is attempting to increase the involvement of the regional commissions and, to that end, a series of meetings have been held in the regions and more are planned for 1980. Attention has been given to organizing an expert group on methodological problems, as requested by the Commission. ^{8/} However, the funding of such an expert group from extrabudgetary funds remains a problem. Continued efforts are being made for funding for ICP and approaches are being made to additional countries, foundations and multinational corporations. The report to the Commission will cover the progress made on all the above matters. The first draft is to be completed by December 1979 and will be circulated to the regional commissions, the World Bank, EEC, the Programa de Estudios Conjuntos sobre la Integración Económica Latinoamericana (ECIEL), the Inter-American Development Bank, and others.

D. International economic classifications

22. A progress report on the work of harmonizing economic classifications will be submitted to the Commission. Work to date on revising the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) has been limited to agriculture, mining, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water. The Joint United Nations Statistical Office/Statistical Office of the European Communities Working Group on World-level Classifications will consider, at its third session, a proposal for the revision of those parts of ISIC covering activities producing non-transportable goods and services, including government services. In addition to the work involved in preparing for the third session of the Joint Working Group, the United Nations

^{7/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 69.

^{8/} Ibid., para. 77 (d).

Statistical Office is participating in the work of developing the Harmonized System of the Customs Co-operation Council and is represented at the sessions of the Harmonized System Committee. The Working Group of the Statistical Commission was informed that it was expected that by the end of 1980 several classifications would have been published, including the Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) and the International Classification of All Goods and Services (ICGS).

23. The report to the Commission will cover the progress in revising ISIC and other work in the field of classification.

E. Social and demographic statistics

1. 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme

24. The document for the Commission is planned to have two major sections, one dealing with methodological work and the other with country developments, including technical co-operation activities. The Working Group was informed that the "Draft principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses" (E/CN.3/515 and Add.1-3) is in the process of being revised, taking account of the comments of the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session. ^{9/} Work is proceeding on a study of census staffing and cost requirements, and progress on this will be included in the report. The first draft of the report will be completed by February 1980 and circulated to the regional commissions and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) for comment.

2. Classification of age

25. The draft provisional agenda included an item on draft guidelines on age-group classifications. A report will be presented to the Commission covering current national practices relating to age classifications, existing international age classifications and age classifications recommended for different purposes. The draft of the document, which will be available at the end of 1979, will be circulated to regional commissions and specialized agencies for comment.

3. Classifications of type and size of place and related geographical concepts

26. A report on national practices will be submitted to the Commission, based on responses to a questionnaire to be sent to approximately 50 countries in November/December 1979. The countries have been selected to provide the proper balance among regions and various levels of development in their statistical systems. The questionnaire includes a question to identify the users of data classified by type and size of place. The report will outline the next steps planned in this field.

^{9/} Ibid., chap. VI.A.

4. Links among economic, social and demographic statistics

27. A progress report entitled "Role of macro- and micro-data structures in the integration of demographic, social and economic statistics" will be submitted to the Commission. It is a continuation and further development of previous work in the Statistical Office on methodologies for integrating social and demographic statistics. The document will explore a number of issues, such as statistical methodology, validity and confidentiality, that were raised by the Commission at the twentieth session. The classification of households will be discussed. The draft document will be circulated to a number of experts in the field and to relevant specialized agencies.

28. The Working Group decided that the report should also highlight the need to give attention to administrative records as a source of data in economic, social and demographic statistics and should include proposals in this field. The Working Group felt that it would be desirable for the Statistical Office to approach a number of countries with a view to obtaining case-study type of information. It recognized that the document had a very broad coverage but felt that individual special subjects in the report could be taken up in more detail at a later stage.

5. Housing and related statistics

29. A report will be presented to the Commission, providing an assessment of the status of work on housing and related statistics and the plans to meet emerging needs for statistics in this field. The report will describe the evolution of the present programme covering collection, compilation and methodological development, identify major uses and users of housing and related statistics, describe the interrelationships with other fields of statistics, attempt to define the subject-matter coverage, and outline the proposed work programme. The draft report will be circulated in January 1980 to the regional commissions and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

6. International migration statistics

30. A strategy for implementing international migration statistics recommendations will be presented to the Commission. The document proposed is more comprehensive than the one originally requested in the draft provisional agenda but it will include the requested review of consolidated statistics of all arrivals and departures. A consultant to the Statistical Office has submitted a first draft of a report that will be the basis of the document for the Commission. The draft will be sent to the World Tourism Organization for comment in order that their views might be incorporated. The document will outline a phased national programme for the collection, tabulation and publication of international migration statistics and a co-operative international programme for the exchange and dissemination of immigration stock data and will study issues and priorities for further work.

7. Civil registration and vital statistics

31. A progress report will be submitted to the Commission reviewing the cumulative effect of work in civil registration and vital statistics, particularly in the

developing countries. It will deal with standards and recommendations, guidelines and handbooks currently being prepared, training, provision of technical and financial assistance, dissemination and use of improved statistics and the future plans and objectives in this field. The document will be circulated to the regional commissions, UNFPA, WHO, the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics and interested bilateral agencies.

F. Environment statistics

32. A progress report will be presented to the Commission describing the work undertaken on guidelines, country practices, regional workshops, national pilot studies, the survey of existing international data (including gaps), the preliminary format and structure for the organization of data and possible collection of statistics and co-ordination measures. The future steps in the programme will also be outlined.

33. The Working Group stressed the importance of environment statistics. It will be important for the report on country practices to reflect the lack of environment statistics in many countries. The need for co-ordination among the international organizations, especially with OECD, was emphasized. It is important to undertake the fundamental work now of seeing what exists, identifying the gaps, identifying the important issues for the next several years and working on those issues.

G. Statistical organization

34. The Working Group was informed that the Statistical Office had been trying, so far unsuccessfully, to recruit staff for this field of work. The existing resources of the Statistical Office had been used, to the extent possible, to carry out work on statistical organization and in particular to complete volume I of the Handbook of Statistical Organization. 10/ The Statistical Office was not in a position to undertake any further work in statistical organization with existing resources. In addition, countries had not responded to date to the invitation extended by the Commission at its twentieth session to provide case-study information on setting priorities, costing and sensitivity analyses. 11/ The Working Group decided to ~~delete~~ this item from the agenda but felt that work on statistical organization should be retained in the work programme of the Statistical Office.

10/ Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 28, vol I (United Nations publication, to be issued).

11/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 151 (b).

H. Technical co-operation

1. International technical co-operation in statistics, 1976-1985

35. A report prepared in co-operation with the specialized agencies and other organizations will be submitted to the Commission. The draft document will be discussed at the fourteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) in March 1980. For a discussion of the content of this report, see paragraphs 63-65 below. 2.

2. National Household Survey Capability Programme

36. A progress report will be submitted to the Commission. For a discussion of this item, see paragraphs 58-62 below.

3. Statistical data processing

37. The Working Group was informed that a progress report would be submitted to the Commission, covering current technical co-operation activities in statistical data processing, census and survey data processing, software development and dissemination, innovations in transferring statistical data processing technology and problems and prospects in co-ordination.

38. The Working Group stressed that this was very important for developing countries, as the absence of a data-processing capability was a constraint to producing statistics in many developing countries. The Working Group requested that the report should include an appraisal of current development of hardware and its relevance and implications to statistics in developing countries.

4. Improving social statistics in developing countries

39. The Working Group decided that this should not be a separate subitem on the agenda but that the information relevant to pilot programmes concerning social statistics, with particular reference to statistics of the needs of children and youth, should be included under the subitem on the National Household Survey Capability Programme (see para. 36 above).
+ 58-62 below

5. Training of statistical personnel

40. A comprehensive review of major training activities in the world will be submitted to the Commission. It will include regional and national training centres and seminars, workshops and short courses organized by the specialized agencies and other international bodies. A structured questionnaire will be sent to the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, requesting information on their training activities. It is proposed to send out this questionnaire in November 1979. Care will be taken to avoid putting an unnecessary reporting burden on the respondents.

41. The Working Group was informed that information on bilateral technical assistance in statistics, including assistance in the field of training, would be included in the document entitled "International technical co-operation in Statistics, 1967-1985" (see para. 35 above).

I. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes

1. Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination

42. The report of the Working Group on its eighth session will be submitted to the Commission.

2. Review of achievements in co-ordination in selected areas and international statistical programmes, 1981-1985

43. A report prepared in co-operation with the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations will be submitted to the Commission. The draft document will be discussed at the fourteenth session of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities in March 1980. The report will use the revised major statistical policy objectives approved by the Commission at its twentieth session. 12/ Reviews of achievements in co-ordination in selected areas, as requested by the Commission, will also be included. 13/ The document will include a number of annexes providing information on the programmes of the Statistical Office, regional commissions and other organizations.

J. Programme objectives: implementation and prospects

1. Regional conference of statisticians and similar bodies

44. A progress report will be submitted to the Commission. Efforts are being made to ensure that the report will be up to date, that relative priorities are assigned to the activities reported on and their effectiveness evaluated. An index or table of contents will also be provided. The document will be prepared in co-operation with the relevant organizations.

2. Statistical work of the specialized agencies

45. The Working Group was informed that at the thirteenth session of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities (March 1979) there had been some discussion of how the progress reports to the Commission might be improved and made more useful. This matter will be discussed again at the fourteenth session of the Sub-Committee. This is in response to the suggestion by the Commission that "qualitative assessments of these programmes might be added to future reports, as well as an over-all table of contents". 14/ The document will be prepared in co-operation with the relevant agencies.

* doc.
SA/14/6

12/ Ibid., para. 220.

13/ Ibid., para. 224.

14/ Ibid., para. 237.

3. Statistical Office of the United Nations

46. The Working Group agreed that the progress report of the Statistical Office should follow the structure of the programme budget rather than the organizational structure of the Statistical Office. The Working Group was informed that the arrangement whereby the Statistical Office carried out programmes 1 and 2 of the medium-term plan for statistics as an integrated entity serving the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development as well as the United Nations system as a whole and Member States was under review. The Working Group reiterated the appeal made by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session that "in carrying out the review, the integrated nature of the statistical programme and of the various activities should be fully recognized and that no change should be made which would in any way disturb the efficiency and effectiveness of the Statistical Office." 15/

K. Other business

47. In the light of the suggestion contained in paragraph 6 above, the Working Group decided that the Statistical Office should prepare a document containing alternative proposals for the future work of the Statistical Commission and its method of operation, based on information to be provided by the Working Group members and other members of the Commission.

L. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-second session of the statistical commission

48. A draft provisional agenda for the 22nd session will be presented to the Commission during the twenty-first session. The Working Group recommended that an item entitled "Improving social statistics in developing countries" should be included. This should cover the results of a survey of pilot programmes concerning social statistics, with particular reference to statistics of the needs of children and youth. The agenda should also include an item on the "Use of administrative records as sources of data".

II. STATISTICAL QUESTIONNAIRES

49. The Working Group discussed this item on the basis of two documents. The first was entitled "Inventory of statistical data collection activities" and was prepared by the United Nations Statistical Office, based on information provided by the regional commissions and specialized agencies. It was prepared in response to a request made by the Working Group at its seventh session, (see E/CN.3/502, para. 58).

50. The document (a) summarized the major changes that had occurred during the past two years in statistical questionnaires; (b) included a brief account of statistics collection from countries through magnetic tapes; (c) described the

15/ Ibid., para. 242.

exchange of completed questionnaires among the international organizations; (d) described the interchange of data among the international organizations other than by completed questionnaires, and (e) presented (in annexes I and II) current information for each of the questionnaires and instances of statistics collection through magnetic tapes.

51. For the first time, the document included (a) information on the collection of data through magnetic tapes, (b) the addressees to whom the questionnaires are sent in the countries and (c) the questionnaires issued by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The information on magnetic tapes was introduced at the initiative of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities at its thirteenth session and reflected the growing importance of data collection through this medium. The addressees were included at the request of the Working Group at its seventh session (E/CN.3/502, para. 58).

52. The Working Group was informed that the previous document had been distributed to all central statistical offices at the request of the Working Group, and many central statistical offices had indicated that the information was of assistance to them in co-ordinating the completion of questionnaires at the national level. Several agencies made statements providing additional information on their data collection activities.

53. The Working Group decided that the "inventory" was extremely valuable in providing information on the number of requests to countries and their timing and thus facilitating co-ordination at the national level. The monitoring of new and discontinued questionnaires was considered to be constructive. The Working Group decided that copies of the Inventory should be distributed to all central statistical offices. Future updating of the Inventory should include a reference to the number of countries that supply statistics on magnetic tape and, to the extent possible treat the collection of micro-data sets. Such sets are requested frequently from countries by international organizations for research purposes and co-ordination of requests at the international level is required.

54. The second document was entitled "Co-ordination of statistical questionnaires" and reported on several major initiatives undertaken by international organizations in data collection methods that reduce the reporting burden on countries. It also reported on the outcome of the Working Group's initiative in asking the Statistical Office to request several countries to review all of the statistical questionnaires that they complete for international organizations. Four countries carried out such reviews, the results of which have been studied and discussed by the agencies involved, and this has led to several new arrangements being developed by those organizations.

55. Finally, the document reported on the experiment of providing the central statistical offices of 30 countries with blank copies of all questionnaires sent to the various ministries of the countries by the Statistical Office, the ILO, FAO, WHO and IMF, with a request that they indicate the ways in which the receipt of these questionnaires could assist them. Generally, countries found the receipt of such questionnaires on a periodic basis to be useful.

56. Several agencies indicated that the addressee for their various questionnaires is determined by each Government.

57. The Working Group stressed that efforts should continue to be made to avoid duplication in collection. At the same time countries should take steps to promote within their national statistical systems a co-ordinated approach to supplying the statistics requested by the international organizations. The Working Group requested an up-dated inventory and a progress report on co-ordination of statistical questionnaires for its ninth session.

CAPS
III. National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP)

58. The Working Group discussed this item on the basis of an oral report by the Director of the United Nations Statistical Office, outlining the events that had taken place since the twentieth session of the Statistical Commission.

59. The Working Group was informed of the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/5 and of the strong support expressed for the programme from all quarters at the Consultative Meeting on NHSCP held in June 1979. As a result of the positive outcome of the Consultative Meeting, a Central Co-ordination Unit to promote, implement and co-ordinate the programme had been established with the help of funding from UNDP, the World Bank, UNFPA and UNICEF. With the co-operation of the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, work was now proceeding with the elaboration of projects in a few countries in each developing region, for which bilateral funds would be sought. The Working Group was informed about the initiative taken by the World Bank, in collaboration with the United Nations Statistical Office and the ILO, concerning the problems of collecting and analysing household survey data on income distribution and related topics. The Working Group was also informed of the collaboration that had been assured at the October 1979 session of the Committee on Improvement of National Statistics (COINS) of the Inter-American Statistical Institute concerning household survey programmes in the Latin American region.

60. The Working Group expressed satisfaction at the progress that had been made since the twentieth session of the Statistical Commission and reiterated its strong support for the programme as a major undertaking of the whole United Nations statistical system. It emphasized the importance of the objectives of the programme, which are to create survey-taking capabilities based on national needs and priorities.

61. It welcomed the close collaboration and the extensive support of the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other bodies in the United Nations system and particularly welcomed the statements of support and interest made by a large number of both developing and developed countries. It requested the United Nations Statistical Office, in collaboration with the interested regional and international organizations to continue its efforts to implement the programme and to report its progress to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-first session. The Working Group expressed particular concern that every effort should be made to ensure that the greatest advantage be taken of the programme by interested developing countries as well as international and regional organizations.

62. It was agreed that the document on NHSCP for the Statistical Commission should consist of a brief description of events since the twentieth session, a report on the first country projects, a discussion of organizational and logistics questions,

a report on fund-raising activities, a discussion of significant problem areas and a draft programme of work.

CAS
IV. International Technical Co-operation in Statistics, 1976-1985

63. The Working Group discussed this item on the basis of a document entitled "Preparation of the paper on 'International technical co-operation in statistics, 1981-1985' for the twenty-first session of the Statistical Commission" and containing a proposal developed following discussions in the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities.

64. The Working Group endorsed the proposals, which were as follows:

(a) Retain the detailed quantitative and qualitative description of actual technical assistance activities for the period 1976-1980;

(b) Provide detailed quantitative projections for the two-year period 1981-1982, with detailed descriptions of the projects proposed;

(c) Provide a statement in as much detail as possible of future directions in technical assistance for the three-year period 1983-1985;

(d) Retain all other elements of the report, as in the past, subject to the modifications requested by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session.

65. The Working Group also agreed that the agenda item should be entitled "International technical co-operation in statistics, 1976-1985". It further agreed that a review of the demand side for technical co-operation would be very useful and that this might be prepared by asking countries to provide forecasts of their requirements.

V. PROPOSED TERMINOLOGY FOR USE BY THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

66. The Working Group discussed this item on the basis of a document entitled "Draft definitions and translations". The document contained revised draft definitions of the terms "recommendations" and "guidelines", taking into account the comments made by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session. 16/ The Working Group endorsed the draft definitions in the document, as follows:

(a) Recommendations are specifications issued by the Commission for adoption and implementation, to the extent possible, by national statistical offices, in the field of statistics;

(b) Guidelines are specifications issued by the Commission for consideration by national statistical offices in their own work in developing statistics.

16/ Ibid., para. 246.

67. The document also included the terms in French, Russian and Spanish corresponding to the English words "recommendations" and "guidelines". These had been developed by the Documentation and Terminology Section of the Translation Division of the Department of Conference Services. The Working Group agreed to the terminology contained in the document, as follows:

English	Recommendations	Guidelines
French	Recomm ^a endations	Guide
Russian	Рекомендации	Руководящие принципы
Spanish	Recomendaciones	Directrices

68. The Working Group recalled that, with respect to the draft definitions of "manuals" (or "handbooks") and "technical reports" contained in document E/CN.3/533, there had been no disagreement by the Commission at the twentieth session. These were as follows:

"Manuals (or handbooks) are publications that provide guidance to countries on the development of statistics through the provision of comprehensive descriptions of procedures, methods, sources and other related matters in a broad area of statistics or a major statistical process, e.g., sampling or index number construction.

"Technical reports are documents or publications that contain material on (a) classifications, concepts, definitions and other related matters that have not as yet received sufficient endorsement to qualify as recommendations or guidelines; (b) procedures, methods, sources and other related matters that are not sufficiently comprehensive to be considered manuals (or handbooks); or (c) matters of interest and potential usefulness to the international statistical community, e.g., studies on statistical organization, country codes and weights and measures conversions."

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

69. The Statistical Office was asked to prepare for the ninth session a document covering the proposed agenda and including outlines of the documents proposed for the twenty-second session of the Statistical Commission.

VII. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NINTH SESSION

70. The Working Group recommended that its ninth session be held at Geneva at the end of October or the middle of November 1981.

29 Sept -
2 Oct '81

Points for discussion

The Commission may wish to adopt the definitions of "recommendations" and "guidelines" and the corresponding translations endorsed by the Working Group (paras. 66-68).

The Commission may wish to recommend the exact dates and place of the ninth session of the Working Group (para. 70).

Annex

AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTH SESSION

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
3. Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-first session of the Statistical Commission
4. Statistical questionnaires
5. National Household Survey Capability Programme
6. International technical co-operation in statistics, 1981-1985
7. Proposed terminology for use by the Statistical Commission
8. Other business
9. Date, and place of the ninth session
10. Adoption of the report of the Working Group to the twenty-first session of the Statistical Commission
