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DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS: SOCIAL INDICATORS AND LINKS AMONG
SOCIAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND RELATED ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS

Progress report on national and international work on social indicators
and on related concepts and classifications for general use

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present document, submitted to the Statistical Commission for information, has been prepared pursuant to the Commission's request at its twentieth session, held in 1979, that the Secretariat should continue to keep national and international work on social indicators and on related concepts and classifications for integration of social, demographic and related economic statistics under review and submit to it at its twenty-second session a summary report on recent developments. The Commission noted the usefulness of the role of the Secretariat in promoting and ensuring co-ordination of international work on social indicators and on related classifications and integration issues, and requested that the Secretariat should continue to ensure co-ordination of international activities in those fields.

The present report is divided into three sections. Section I (paras. 4-19) contains a review of national activities on social indicators and related work on the integration of social, demographic and related economic statistics. Major activities include the regular issue by many developed and developing countries of compendiums of social statistics and indicators, the development of basic data

* E/CN.3/1983/1.

sources for integrated statistics and indicators (particularly multi-subject household survey), the preparation of social reports and the development of integrated statistical frameworks. Section II (paras. 20-40) contains a review of comprehensive international programmes on social indicators, namely those of the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Bank, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Commission of the European Communities and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Section III (paras. 41-85) contains a summary of current methodological developments in the specialized subject areas of interest for social indicators, the present general situation of data availability and comparability at the national and international levels for indicators, and objectives and arrangements for the co-ordination of international work.

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its nineteenth session, the Statistical Commission decided that preliminary guidelines and illustrative series for social indicators should be published by the United Nations, based on the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on this subject, amended to take account of the comments of the Commission. ^{1/} The preliminary guidelines and illustrative series furnished a flexible and evolutionary outline, subject to continuing refinement as statistical and conceptual development proceeds, for the formulation and selection of measures pertaining to the fields of social concern and their components which had been first set out, in the context of the United Nations, in a publication issued in 1975. ^{2/} The approach to social indicators emphasized in the preliminary guidelines linked their development closely to the development and integration of social, demographic and related statistics, and to the measurement and assessment of living conditions and the circumstances and factors which influenced them. This approach was a continuation and expansion of the approach taken in earlier United Nations reports on levels of living. The long-term effectiveness and soundness of social indicators depend on their development in the context of a framework for integration and on their firm basis in reliable, comprehensive bodies of basic statistics.

2. In approving the guidelines at its nineteenth session, the Commission stressed the importance of continued international co-operation and co-ordination of work in this field. To this end, it decided that "The Secretariat should continue to keep national and international work on social indicators under review and submit a summary report on recent developments in the field to the Commission at its twentieth session". ^{3/} Pursuant to this request, the Commission at its twentieth session, considered a progress report of the Secretary-General on this subject (E/CN.3/517) and requested that it be "updated in the light of the Commission's comments and then made available to countries and interested international authorities". ^{4/} At the same time, the Commission requested that the Secretariat

^{1/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910), para. 105. The amended report of the Secretary-General was subsequently issued as Social Indicators: Preliminary Guidelines and Illustrative Series, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 63 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.XVII.8).

^{2/} Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics, Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 18 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.74.XVII.8).

^{3/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910), para. 105 (c).

^{4/} Ibid., 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 121 (c) (i). The revised progress report on national and international work on social indicators was subsequently issued in 1981 (ST/ESA/STAT/102).

should continue to keep national and international work on social indicators under review, seek to ensure co-ordination of international activities in that field and submit a summary report on recent developments to it at its twenty-second session. 5/

3. The present report has been prepared to meet that request. It is divided into three sections. Section I contains a review of national activities concerning social indicators. Several different types of activities are discussed, ranging from the relatively straightforward compilation of available series in compendiums to the elaboration of integrated statistical frameworks. Particular emphasis is given to new publications, the development of data sources, and the relation of social and economic statistics. Section II contains a review of international activities in general social indicators and related data development programmes. Section III contains a review, firstly, of the development of indicators in specific fields, mainly from an international perspective, and provides references to the work in each field with particular emphasis on the development of practical concepts and methods, and, secondly, of arrangements for international co-ordination.

I. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

4. Official national work on social indicators and on related concepts and classifications for the integration and linkage of social, demographic and related economic and environment statistics is proceeding along several diverse channels. These include: (a) the compilation and publication of compendiums; (b) the development of integrated socio-economic statistics in the social fields; and (c) the development of general frameworks for statistical integration. Each of these topics is discussed below.

A. Compendiums of social statistics and indicators

1. Publications

5. Many developed countries and a few developing countries are compiling and issuing compendiums of social statistics and indicators on a periodic basis. The main objective of most national publications is to bring together available statistics on social and related economic conditions in a convenient and readily accessible format for non-specialists, policy-planners and decision-makers. Among the developed countries which have issued such compendiums are Australia (biennially, since 1976), Austria (triennially, since 1977), Canada (triennially, since 1974), Finland (1977), France (every two to three years, since 1973), Hungary (1980), Portugal (several times per year, since 1980), Sweden (annually, plus occasional special studies, since 1975), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (annually, since 1970), and the United States of America (triennially, since 1974).

5/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 121 (c) (ii).

6. Among the developing countries and territories which have issued such compendiums are Brazil (1979), El Salvador (1980), Fiji (annually, since 1973), Guam (quarterly newsletter, since 1976), Hong Kong (triennially, since 1974), Indonesia (annually, since 1971), Israel (1976 and 1980), Kenya (quarterly newsletter, since 1976), the Philippines (biennially, since 1973 to 1977 and in 1980), and Singapore (annual newsletter).

7. Comparison of the subject-matter coverage of these publications with the coverage of the United Nations preliminary guidelines and illustrative series on social indicators shows relatively general agreement on a common core of coverage, including population, education, health and housing; however, there are numerous differences of detail in coverage and in the organization of the material, and, in some cases, various additional topics are covered. Among these topics are environment (see para. 69 below), several relating to special population groups, such as the elderly and native peoples in the case of Canada, and elements of social participation. The United States publication places comparatively greater emphasis on attitudinal measures of public perceptions and on international comparisons through the inclusion of special sections in each chapter. The Swedish compendium has a separate chapter on patterns of consumption of food, drink and tobacco, and the United Kingdom publication includes relatively detailed information on public expenditure and human resources, other resources in different social fields as well as overall, and a section on transport and communications.

2. Basic data sources

8. In the developed countries, a wide range of basic data sources for the selection of social data already exists. Indeed, as has already been noted, a major purpose of compendiums of social indicators is to assemble important series from scattered, heterogeneous and often inaccessible sources into a single convenient reference book focusing on social and related economic conditions. Sources of data for national compendiums are analysed in more detail in a United Nations publication on the integration of social statistics. ^{6/} The most important sources are national population and housing censuses and microcensuses, and national household surveys. Some examples are the following:

(a) In Social Trends, the most important sources are the population census, the continuous General Household Survey and the continuous Family Expenditure Survey. In addition, data are drawn from eleven periodic and two major ad hoc surveys; ^{7/}

^{6/} Studies in the Integration of Social Statistics: Technical Report, Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 24 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.XVII.4), part four and annex VI.

^{7/} United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Central Statistical Office, Social Trends, No. 9 (London, HM Stationery Office, 1979), annex B.

(b) A similar number of surveys is drawn on for the Canadian, Finnish, French, 8/ and Swedish publications, and a much larger number for Social Indicators, III; 9/

(c) In Austria and Poland, the microcensuses are extensively used;

(d) In Hungary, the principal source is the population data base ("ELAR"), which combines data from censuses, surveys, registration and vital records.

9. In addition, to ongoing and ad hoc multi-subject and specialized household surveys, microcensuses and data bases such as those cited above, several developed countries have conducted one or more surveys exclusively concerned with living conditions. Among these are the following:

(a) In Finland, the first Survey on Living Conditions was conducted by the Central Statistical Office in 1978 and is to be repeated periodically; a publication on the results was issued in 1979; 10/

(b) In France, a trial survey on unfavourable living conditions (Enquête sur les situations défavorisées) was conducted by the Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques in urban areas in 1978;

(c) In Norway, a survey on levels of living was carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics in 1973 and 1978, and is to be repeated at five-year intervals. The results of the 1973 survey were published in 1975, and background reports in 1973 and 1980, providing much of the data base for Norway's work on planning its living-conditions distribution policy. 11/

10. These issues are further explored in the report of an expert group meeting convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, held at

8/ France, Données sociales, 1978 (Social Data) (Paris, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, 1978), annex 2.

9/ United States of America, Department of Commerce, Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards and Bureau of the Census, Social Indicators III (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1980). The survey sources are given in the technical notes in appendix A.

10/ Finland, Survey on Living Conditions, 1978 (Helsinki, Central Statistical Office, 1979), Finnish and English editions.

11/ Level of Living 1973 (Oslo, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1975), in Norwegian with English notes and headings; Stein Ringen, "An introduction to the Level of Living Study" (Bergen, The Level of Living of Study, Memorandum No. 23), mimeo; and Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Government Administration, Department for Income Policy, "Planning for a distribution policy, a Norwegian programme" (Oslo, 1980), mimeo. (Also issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development as SME/CSPCC/80.32).

Bangkok from 10 to 16 October 1978. ^{12/} In its recommendations, the expert group particularly emphasized (a) the development of basic data sources, including population censuses, post-enumeration surveys, vital registration systems and integrated household survey programmes; (b) the need for central administrative and technical co-ordination among these sources; and (c) the importance of efforts to improve the utilization of basic sources through the development of data bases, including computer tapes for users, and fully documented data inventories, including methodological documentation.

3. Monitoring trends and levels of socio-economic development

11. In many developing countries, there is considerable interest on the part of planning authorities in the development of social indicators for monitoring the rate and impact of trends of socio-economic development and for assessing the impact of programmes and policies on social conditions. India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Morocco, the Republic of Korea and Thailand are studying the potential usefulness of social indicators for socio-economic monitoring at the level of projects, and more broadly.

12. For the general monitoring of trends of socio-economic development, various lists of social indicators have been proposed and tested for use at national, regional and local levels. They draw primarily on household survey data but also use administrative data on the social services and the social and economic infrastructure, and on vital statistics. For example, the Statistical Co-ordination Office of the National Economic and Development Authority of the Philippines has undertaken a programme to develop a system of indicators ^{13/} geared towards the policy objectives of the Philippine Development Plan on the one hand, and towards the Philippine statistical development programme on the other. Another set of proposals can be found in the country case studies undertaken by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) on the measurement and analysis of progress at the local level (see para. 28 below).

13. The development of social indicators for monitoring and evaluating development projects has also been proposed. This application raises various practical, theoretical and methodological issues, some of which are discussed in Social Indicators: Preliminary Guidelines and Illustrative Series. ^{14/} However, while there has been considerable study and field testing of the use of social indicators for project evaluation, and many individual studies have been successfully completed, no consensus on reliable concepts and methods has yet been reached. Various approaches and case studies, including the use of small-scale household

^{12/} Problems to be Solved in the Development of Data for Integrated Population and Development Planning, Asian Population Studies Series No. 42 (ST/ESCAP/75).

^{13/} Economic and Social Indicators, advance edition (Manila, 1980), 270 pp.

^{14/} United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.XVII.8., para. 2.11.

surveys, are discussed in Systematic Monitoring and Evaluation of Integrated Development Programmes: A Source-Book, 15/ which also provides a comprehensive bibliography. The publication presents guidelines for selecting suitable indicators and identifying and developing data sources, as well as a limited number of illustrations of indicators from the case studies.

14. The measurement of physical well-being and the international comparison of countries' levels and rates of change through a single index have been proposed by the Overseas Development Council (Washington). The physical quality of life index (PQLI) combines measures of life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy in one series, and levels and trends for most countries have been calculated. 16/

15. Another method of monitoring trends and levels of socio-economic development is social reporting, which is usually defined explicitly in terms of policy formulation and analysis. Some recent examples of periodic social reports are:

(a) China, State Statistical Bureau, Communiqué of the State Statistical Bureau of the People's Republic of China on Fulfilment of China's 1979 National Economic Plan, 1980, Chinese/English, 51 pages;

(b) Jamaica, National Planning Agency, Economic and Social Survey, 1978, annual, approximately 430 pages;

(c) Japan, Economic Planning Agency, 1979 Annual Reports on National Life; Towards Improving the Foundation of Living and Expanding Opportunities, English, 161 pages.

In addition, the planning office of Belgium issued a pilot study for a social report in 1979. 17/ While relatively few countries publish comprehensive social reports, many ad hoc governmental publications are issued annually in specific fields such as health, education, labour and housing.

15/ Ibid., Sales No. E.78.IV.11.

16/ Morris D. Morris, Measuring the Condition of the World's Poor: The Physical Quality of Life Index (New York, Pergamon Press, 1979); and Disparity Reduction Rates in Social Indicators: A Proposal for Measuring and Targeting Progress in Meeting Basic Needs, Monograph No. 11 (Washington, Overseas Development Council, 1978).

17/ Développement d'indicateurs sociaux; vers un rapport social (Development of social indicators; towards a social report) (Brussels, Bureau du Plan, 1979).

16. At the national level, there is also considerable non-governmental interest in social reporting, and social reports have been published privately in several countries, for example, Morocco. 18/ In the case of non-governmental studies, the results are usually used by Governments as a basis for considering an official programme of social reporting.

B. Integration of social and related statistics

17. Several aspects of the relation between social statistics and the national accounts and balances have been studied by the United Nations since 1976. These include statistics of: (a) distribution of household income, consumption and accumulation, including total consumption of the population; (b) government expenditure in the social fields; and (c) comprehensive economic statistics in the social fields. The development of comprehensive socio-economic statistics by field independent of, but largely consistent with, national accounts, has been pursued extensively by France in the form of satellite accounts, 19/ and by the Netherlands in the field of health. The Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE) of France has issued detailed reports on the health, housing and social security accounts, and work is under way on the education accounts. 20/ In France, this work is seen as complementing the work on social indicators which, it is argued, can help assess the results of action in a given field but are too limited in coverage and unsystematic in organization to provide a detailed basis for the development of the basic statistics.

18. Another approach to integration is through the development and application of socio-economic group classifications. Social indicators for socio-economic groups are available in some detail in the compendiums of France and the United Kingdom. National and international examples of socio-economic classifications are discussed in Studies in the Integration of Social Statistics: Technical Report 21/, and in

18/ Abdelmalek Cherkaoui, Indicateurs socio-économiques du Maroc: une mesure qualitative du niveau de développement (Casablanca, Shoof, 1980).

19/ Philippe Pommier, "Social expenditure: socialization of expenditure? The French experience of satellite accounts", Review of Income and Wealth, vol. 27, No. 4 (December 1981), pp. 373-386.

20/ "Les comptes du logement en base 1971 (Production et investissement) Séries 1964-1974", "Les comptes satellites du SECN: Les comptes de la santé, méthodes et séries 1950-1977" and "Les comptes de la protection sociale; méthodes et séries 1959-1978", Collections INSEE, Series C (Comptes et planification), Nos. 43, 74 and 82; Odile Carrère and Roland Daumont, "Le compte de l'éducation et des formations; méthode et premiers résultats", Economie et statistique, No. 75 (Paris, INSEE, February 1976), pp. 39-53.

21/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.XVII.4. See pp. 70, 71 and 94-97.

the Proceedings of the Meeting on Socio-economic Determinants and Consequences of Mortality, held at Mexico City from 19 to 25 June 1979. 22/ In a related development in recent years, the disaggregation of the household sector according to socio-economic criteria has been developed for social accounts matrices in national accounts in some developing countries. Application of such a classification in a social accounts matrix can substantially increase the value of national accounts as a source of social indicators. Classifications have been developed for this purpose in, for example, Botswana and Sri Lanka.

19. In the United States of America, work is being pursued on social indicators and on a framework for social statistics. 23/ This approach emphasizes, as did the Statistical Commission at its nineteenth session, the importance and usefulness of harmonizing and co-ordinating concepts, classifications and definitions in the social, demographic and related economic fields. A similar approach to the co-ordination of concepts, classifications and definitions in the social fields, based on work on household surveys, has been adopted in Canada. 24/ Work has also been done in some countries on the application of a human stock-flow matrix such as the one set out in Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics - for example, in Argentina (where several matrices were prepared from data collected in the multi-subject household survey conducted in Buenos Aires in 1974-1975) and in the United States of America. 25/ In Japan, a system of social indicators "for measuring comprehensively and systematically a variety of people's conditions of life or the conditions of social goals" has been developed for regional use. 26/ The system has been adopted in 39 of the 47 prefectures and is used by them for programme planning and management.

22/ Published by the United Nations and the World Health Organization (New York and Geneva, 1980); see especially Brigitte Döring-Bradley and Robert Johnston, "Socio-economic classifications for the study of mortality differentials", pp. 54-88. See also Alain Desrosières and Laurent Thevenot, "Les mots et les chiffres: les nomenclatures socioprofessionnelles", Economie et statistique, No. 110 (Paris, INSEE, April 1979), pp. 49-66.

23/ United States of America, Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards, "Social indicators and social accounts; a development strategy", A Framework for Planning U.S. Federal Statistics for the 1980s (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1978), chap. 24.

24/ Statistics Canada, Social Concepts Directory: A Guide Towards Standardization in Statistical Surveys (Ottawa, 1980), in English/French.

25/ Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, Sistema de Estadísticas Sociales y Demográficas, Secuencia Activa: Posibilidades Analíticas (Buenos Aires, no date given), M. M. McMillen and K. C. Land, Methodological Considerations in the Demographic Approach to Social Accounting, Working Papers in Applied Social Statistics (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, no date given).

26/ Research Committee, Council of National Living, Measures for the Quality of Life (Tokyo, Economic Welfare Research Division, Economic Planning Agency, 1979).

II. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES

20. At the international level, there is ongoing work of two types concerning social indicators, namely general developmental and applied programmes and the development of indicators in specific fields. General programmes are discussed in the present section. Work carried out nationally and internationally in specific fields is reviewed in section III below.

A. United Nations system

1. United Nations

21. The Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat has continued its methodological work on fields of social concern and social indicators within the context of work on the integration of social, demographic and related economic statistics, and on co-ordination (see paras. 84 and 85 below). The Statistical Office also prepares periodically the Compendium of Social Statistics. The 1977 edition, 27/ prepared in collaboration with the specialized agencies and other statistical sources, includes estimates and projections for the world and regions, key series for countries, general series for countries, and general series for cities or urban agglomerations. It is over 1,300 in length, and reflects the substantial improvements made in the collection of basic statistics in these fields, particularly in the developing countries, since the 1967 issue of the Compendium. It is planned to publish the next issue about 1985.

22. The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly have considered methods for improving the collection, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of information and data used in studying the social situation in the world, particularly with reference to the Report on the World Social Situation, which is issued every three to four years. A report of the Secretary-General entitled "Improvement of the methodology for monitoring social trends" (A/35/340), which was submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, reviewed the data and indicators currently available for the global monitoring of social trends and policies and current developments, and the expected improvements in the data base for monitoring social trends.

23. The development of statistics and indicators specifically related to the situation of women was recommended at the international level in the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year held at Mexico City, from 19 June to 2 July 1975. 28/ This was followed up by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2061 (LXII) of 12 May 1977, entitled

27/ Statistical Papers, Series K, No. 4 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.80.XVII.6).

28/ See Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1), chap. II, sect. A, paras. 161-173.

"Improvement of the data base for measuring the implementation of the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year", and reaffirmed and elaborated in the Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women held at Copenhagen, from 14 to 30 July 1980, 29/ and in resolution 1981/11, of 6 May 1981, entitled "Social indicators applicable to studies on women". The resolution noted that work in this area, including the standardization of terms of reference and harmonization of the collection of data in the United Nations system, as well as the preparation of sets of social indicators should be undertaken promptly by the Secretariat. In 1978, the Statistical Office initiated a long-range programme for the improvement of concepts and methods suitable for collecting statistics on the role and situation of women. An overview of potential sources of sex biases in statistics was issued as a technical report in 1980. 30/ The report analysed possible sources of sex bias in national and international concepts, classifications and definitions concerning head of household, household and family, economic activity, definition and enumeration of the total population and population by age, marital status, education and literacy, migration and fertility and mortality. The report is now being used as a basis for a more comprehensive review of national practices. The ongoing work of the International Labour Organisation in this area is described in paragraph 51 below.

24. In 1981, the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), in co-operation with the Statistical Office and the Advancement of Women Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, began a programme of work on improving statistics and indicators relating to women. The objective is to improve the availability, and promote the use at the national and international levels, of indicators and the related basic statistics concerning women, with special reference to the role of women in all aspects of economic and social development. In the first phase of the work, a technical document will be prepared to provide a state of the art review of concepts, uses and data sources for indicators of the situation of women, drawing extensively on previous work of the United Nations system.

2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

25. The Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) 31/ gave new impetus and direction to the work of

29/ See Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.IV.3), chap. I, sect. A, paras. 257-261.

30/ Report of the Secretariat entitled "Sex-based stereotypes, sex biases and national data systems" (ST/ESA/STAT/99).

31/ Report of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Rome, 12-20 July 1979 (WCARRD/REP); transmitted to the members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/34/485).

the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on socio-economic indicators. The Programme of Action recommended that countries develop appropriate indicators pertaining to the progress of agrarian reform and rural development, establish benchmarks relating to the indicators, and report on changes at every other biennial conference of FAO. Two provisional lists of indicators were issued in 1980 for review and comment. 32/ The second phase of the work involved pilot studies for testing and refining the indicators, conducted in at least 16 developing countries, and the third phase consisted of a regional workshop in each developing region, to discuss the results of the pilot studies and to prepare guidelines on socio-economic indicators. The workshops were held during 1982. If adequate extrabudgetary funding is available, a fourth phase will cover technical assistance to countries, at their request, in assisting them to set up capabilities for compiling indicators and to report to FAO on a regular basis. The final phase, in 1982/1983, will provide for an international analysis of country results and a report on progress in rural development to be submitted to the FAO Conference in 1983.

26. The work of FAO on statistics and indicators of food supplies, consumption and nutrition is discussed in paragraphs 64 and 65 below.

3. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

27. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) has conducted a research programme on statistics and indicators for measuring and analysing socio-economic development since the 1960s. In a study prepared within the programme, one hundred indicators were compiled in 1960 and 1970 in a research data bank on development for countries with a population of one million or more. Four volumes have been published in connexion with the study: a compilation for 1970, a compilation with adjustments for age structure, 1960-1970 comparisons, and notes on the indicators. 33/ In compiling the list, UNRISD emphasized a balanced coverage of the major sectors of social and economic development and the international availability and comparability of the data. Given these criteria, UNRISD excluded indicators of environment, land tenure, employment, income distribution, distribution of government expenditures by function, social security and human freedom. Volume IV provides detailed analytical notes on the indicators included and on many which were excluded, including concepts and definitions,

32/ "Draft socio-economic indicators for monitoring and evaluation of agrarian reform and rural development" (ESS/Misc/80-7), and "Draft case socio-economic indicators for monitoring and evaluation of agrarian reform and rural development (ESS/Misc/80-6).

33/ United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Compilation of Indicators for 1970, Report No. 76.1/Rev.1 (Geneva, 1976); Compilation of Indicators for 1970 with Adjustments for Age Structure, Report No. 76.2 (Geneva, 1976); 1960-1970 Comparisons, Report No. 76.3 (Geneva, 1976); Notes on the Indicators, Report No. 77.2 (Geneva, 1977).

reliability, consistency, sources and comparability. A survey of methodological problems in the selection and analysis of socio-economic development indicators was published by UNRISD in 1979, 34/ and a more detailed study is in preparation.

28. The Institute has also been concerned with improving methods for collecting statistics for indicators of development at the local level. Case studies were undertaken in eight countries (Ghana, India, Poland, Argentina, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea) on the selection and availability of data for suitable indicators at the local level, and the results were published in three volumes under the series entitled "Measurement and Analysis of Progress at the Local Level". In 1979, a trial project for a development monitoring service at the local level was set up at Kerala, India. Data are collected using four collection schedules in respect of each of the 12 "socio-economic observation areas" with average populations of 12,500. The schedules call for "Information about the area, collected from key respondents; information about each household in the area (enumeration) ...; for a sample of households (up to 200 households per area), detailed information on demographic and socio-economic characteristics of household members and further particulars on the dwelling; and wage rates ... from key respondents monthly ...". 35/ Other schedules are being prepared or considered covering special events, income and employment, morbidity and height and weight of children under 10 years of age.

4. United Nations Children's Fund

29. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is encouraging the development of statistics and indicators needed to help in the improvement of services for the well-being of children and youth, through support given to a number of countries in building up their statistical capabilities. Much of UNICEF assistance has been directed at improving the survey capabilities of the countries with which it has been working, in the context of an integrated system of social statistics. On the basis of these and related data collection activities, UNICEF is encouraging baseline surveys and the periodic recording of key "output" indicators. A technical report on this subject was prepared by UNRISD for UNICEF. 36/ In 1979, UNICEF and the Economic Commission for Latin America issued a bilingual (Spanish/English) compendium of Indicators on the Situation of Children in Latin America and the Caribbean. UNICEF is also working with UNRISD in the development of community-level statistics and indicators (see para. 28 above).

34/ D. McGranahan, E. Pizarro and Claude Richard, Methodological Problems in Selection and Analysis of Socio-economic Development Indicators, Report No. 79.4 (Geneva, UNRISD, 1979).

35/ N. T. Mathew and Wolf Scott, Socioeconomic Observation Areas in Kerala, Report No. 80.2 (Geneva, UNRISD, 1980). The proposed indicators are summarized in annex 6.

36/ Donald McGranahan, Improvement of Information on the Conditions of Children, Report No. 80.4 (Geneva, UNRISD, 1980).

5. World Bank

30. The World Bank's interest in social indicators stems from its increasing data needs in social development analysis and research. The World Bank publishes annually the World Bank Atlas, which contains measures of population, per capita product and growth rates. The World Development Report, published annually since 1978, contains an annex of world development indicators, which in addition to economic indicators includes a set of social indicators covering population, demography, labour force, urbanization, life expectancy, health, education and income distribution. The indicators are selected from a larger data set which is maintained by the World Bank for use in its various operational documents. Work is now in progress on compiling consistent time-series data for the period 1959 to the present. The basic data are compiled from the publications and data files of the United Nations system, and supplemented by more recent information obtained from country sources through the World Bank's country missions.

6. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

31. Since 1973, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has sponsored a variety of activities, at the international, regional and national levels, on the application of socio-economic indicators to development planning and related issues. Among the workshop reports in this field issued by UNESCO since 1977 are the following:

- (a) Indicators of Social and Economic Change and their Applications, Reports and Papers in the Social Sciences, No. 37 (Paris, 1977);
- (b) Indicators of Environmental Quality and Quality of Life, Reports and Papers in the Social Sciences, No. 38 (Paris, 1978);
- (c) Socio-economic Indicators for Planning: Methodological Aspects and Selected Examples, Socio-Economic Studies, No. 2 (Paris, 1981);
- (d) Women and Development: Indicators of their Changing Role, Socio-Economic Studies, No. 3 (Paris, 1981).

B. Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

32. In 1976, the Standing Commission on Statistics of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) published The system of basic indicators for social statistics as a basis for further work on social indicators and related statistics. A companion publication on methods of calculation for the System was issued in 1978. ^{37/} The final version of the complete System was approved in

^{37/} The System of Basic Indicators for Social Statistics (Moscow, December 1976), English and Russian editions; The System of Basic Indicators for Social Statistics: Methods of Calculation (Moscow, 1978), in Russian only.

1980. 38/ It covers the following 16 fields of social concern: population and family; education; labour force and employment; social composition of society; distribution of population incomes and properties; consumption; health services; housing; culture; physical culture, tourism and leisure; population time budget; social insurance; development of public utilities; environment conservation in cities; labour conditions; and participation of the population in public and political activities.

33. The purpose of the work is to conduct a comprehensive and integrated study of various facets of social conditions and way of life and to evaluate programmes for social development and raising living standards. At the same time, the System's indicators make it possible for interested CMEA countries to carry out international comparisons. At the present stage, the planning and administrative bodies of CMEA member countries need increasingly more information providing generalized and interconnected descriptions of social phenomena and processes. That factor has required new conceptual approaches towards the elaboration of social statistics indicators. The present development of social statistics focuses on a systematic approach towards describing and examining social conditions, and seeks to combine, within one system, various groups of social indicators previously relatively isolated from one another. This can be done through the introduction into the system of a common observation unit and agreed concepts, classifications and groupings. The systematic approach makes it possible to ensure a comprehensive examination of various social processes and to develop further the analytical potentialities of information by identifying interrelationships between social indicators. This means that the system of social statistics is more than a mere aggregate of individual indicators, as it ensures a generalized and integrated idea of the interrelationships between social phenomena. The systematic nature of social statistics presupposes that all the more important spheres of social processes are covered, the interrelationships between individual components (i.e., indicators of separate subsystems and separate subsystems themselves) are ensured, and a common observation unit and common concepts and classifications are applied.

34. At present, the method of social indicators is the main approach to the System's construction. It consists of selecting the most appropriate indicators to describe various social phenomena and processes (for instance, education, state of health, income distribution). The changes in the indicators as well as the establishment of the interrelationships between them make it possible to draw conclusions on the development of the phenomena and the processes observed. This method is based on available statistics, and its merits include its relative simplicity and broad practical applicability. At the same time, the system of social statistics indicators can be used in the form of integrated flow matrices to

38/ Information, in English, on the complete System is contained in "Information of the CMEA Secretariat on the Elaboration of the System of Social Statistics Indicators", Secretariats of CMEA and Economic Commission for Europe, mimeo, no date given.

identify movements of individual groups of the population by educational level, age etc. However, the application of this method depends on the availability of a large volume of statistical information, which at present is not generally available from national statistical bodies. Therefore, its application in future will entail further research and pilot projects.

35. The system of social statistics cannot be separated from economic statistics. For planning purposes, it is of tremendous importance to study social phenomena in close relation to the analyses of economic processes. Social phenomena are determined by economic processes; on the other hand, social processes themselves influence economic development. In recommending the System of Basic Indicators for Social Statistics for practical application, the CMEA Standing Commission on Statistics proceeded from the premise that the System opens up wider opportunities for studying, comparing and forecasting social processes in dynamic development and for a more comprehensive and in-depth use of them for the benefit of economic development of CMEA member countries. At the same time, the Standing Commission intends to work out a plan for the further co-operation of CMEA countries in improving, extending and supplementing the System. The following subjects, inter alia, are under examination as possible fields of activity: obtaining a better interdependence of various indicators, in particular on the basis of econometric models; developing balances and matrices of social data flows; studying the interdependence of national economic balances and social statistics and the national economic balances system and the population incomes system; and improving and changing the organization of statistical observation and methods of data collection. Testing the System by means of bilateral or multilateral comparisons of specific indicators between and among interested CMEA countries on the basis of a mutually agreed programme can also become an important area of further co-operation in improving it. A case in point is the social mobility comparison carried out by Hungary and Poland. Such comparisons can also cover the System in general; an example was the general comparison of social statistics indicators initiated by Yugoslavia and Hungary.

C. Commission of the European Communities

36. In 1975, the European Communities undertook a programme aimed at selecting and defining social indicators oriented towards living conditions and their underlying circumstances, and at improving the necessary basic statistics, particularly those most closely related to the Community's social policies. The first issue of the periodical entitled Social Indicators of the European Community, 1960-1975 was published in 1977, and the second, covering the period 1960-1978, in 1980. The first issue presented 66 tables of comparable indicators, covering the Community's (then) nine members. The Commission plans to issue the full publication every three years, summary indicators in short form in the intervening years, and an occasional examination in depth of particular policy concerns.

37. The Commission is sponsoring work on the development and use of household surveys in several fields with a view to providing improved, comparable social statistics and indicators. A report on a small-scale experimental survey of the public attitudes towards health, health services and housing in eight countries was

published in 1980, and a second small-scale experimental survey on public attitudes towards conditions of working life was completed in 1978. Surveys in the biennial series of labour force sample surveys on a comparative basis were carried out in 1977 and 1979. The 1979 survey included supplementary questions on education, training, the search for employment and the transition to working life generally. Work by the Community on statistics and indicators of social security is discussed in paragraph 58 below.

D. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

38. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched a development programme for social indicators in 1970. The first phase of the work was to delineate the social concerns to which social indicators should be addressed. In the next phase of the programme, OECD undertook to specify the series of social indicators which could be used to monitor the social concerns. As part of the work, technical studies on the specification and development of social indicators were prepared on work satisfaction, health, housing, victimization, disaggregation of indicators, disability, income and wealth, learning and time-use. Progress reports have been issued periodically. 39/

39. Based on the results of the studies and on a series of technical meetings, recommendations for 33 social indicators relating to approximately 20 of the original concerns and subconcerns have been approved and are to be issued in 1982 as The OECD List of Social Indicators. It is believed that the list will be largely usable in the immediate future by member countries of OECD interested in the implementation of a common international core of indicators. In related work, an "Inventory of data sources for OECD social indicators" is in preparation as part IV of The OECD List of Social Indicators, and a model questionnaire and related specifications have been developed for a comprehensive household survey to collect comparable data for social indicators across all the social concerns. Austria, Finland, Japan, New Zealand and Norway have implemented the survey in its original or a closely comparable form. Portugal undertook experiments during 1980, using mainly the questions relating to working conditions, and intends to extend the work in 1982. Spain and Switzerland have expressed interest in taking the survey but have not yet done so owing to lack of resources. Data collection for the 33 adopted indicators is in progress, and it will eventually result in the publication of a compendium of social indicators. The OECD has published an ad hoc review, entitled "Social change in OECD countries, 1950-1980", in volume 107 of The OECD Observer.

40. In addition to a social indicators development programme, which is geared to the developed countries in OECD, the Development Centre of OECD started a research project on social indicators in developing countries in 1976 and convened a study

39/ The latest is "Social indicators: results to April 1979 and future prospects" (Paris, OECD, 1980), mimeo.

session on this topic in Paris in 1977. 40/ More recently, the Development Centre initiated a research programme on life expectancy measurement, based on work in the 1970s on demographic accounting. The Development Centre and the Institute of Development Studies (Sussex, England) convened a workshop on the subject in June 1981, which reviewed and co-ordinated country studies in Brazil, Malaysia, Kenya and the United Kingdom. 41/

III. INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATION AND SPECIALIZED ACTIVITIES

41. International social indicators programmes must rely on conceptual and methodological development in the specific fields of social concern in order to achieve reliable and valid summary indicators for multi-disciplinary use. International programmes are also dependent on national data collection and dissemination programmes to provide the necessary basic statistics on a regular, timely and accurate basis for calculating indicators. Section A (paras. 42-83 below) contains a summary of current conceptual and methodological development in the specialized fields of interest for social indicators, as well as the present general situation of data availability and comparability at the national and international levels for these indicators. Section B (paras. 84 and 85 below) contains a review of the objectives of, and arrangements for, co-ordination of international work on social indicators.

A. Development of social indicators in specific fields

42. The present section provides an illustrative selection of references, illustrations and examples of applications. The order of presentation follows that used in Social Indicators: Preliminary Guidelines and Illustrative Series. More detailed analyses of indicators in these fields have been issued by the United Nations, 42/ UNRISD (see para. 27 above) and OECD (see paras. 38 and 39 above).

40/ Social Indicators in Developing Countries (Paris, OECD, 1979).

41/ "Life expectancy as an integrating concept for social and demographic data: summary of research in progress" (CD/R(82)3003) (Paris, OECD, January 1982); M. A. Costa and D. M. Vetter, "Life expectancy as an integrating concept for social and demographic data: the Brazil country study, a preliminary report" (CD/R(82)3004) (Paris, OECD, March 1982).

42/ Progress report of the Secretary-General on national and international work on social indicators (ST/ESA/STAT/102); table 2 lists the indicators recommended and used by the United Nations, the World Bank, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the European Economic Community and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

A critical review and analysis of indicators in the compendium of the United States of America has also been issued. 43/

1. Population, family and households

43. These fields are covered in some detail in most national and international social indicators programmes. A wide variety of demographic measures, including estimates and projections prepared by the United Nations, are available for most countries, and United Nations estimates of infant mortality are in preparation. Series on household size and size distribution are widely available. However, only limited data on household and family composition are available at the international level, and there are no international recommendations on the necessary classifications.

44. Conceptual and practical problems have limited the development of reliable indicators of internal and international migration, but recent work of the United Nations is providing guidance and assistance not previously available. 44/ An analysis of major international migration series was published by the United Nations in 1978. 45/

2. Learning and educational services

45. A review of social indicators in the field of education, mainly in the European region, is in preparation by the UNESCO Office of Statistics for a joint meeting on statistics on education of the Conference of European Statisticians and UNESCO, to be held at Geneva in September 1982. UNESCO annually compiles and issues series on educational enrolments, gross and net enrolment ratios and teachers by level and sex, and on educational expenditures. As series on educational attainment and literacy are usually available only from population censuses, these indicators are available much less frequently. In the case of enrolment ratios, different definitions are used, depending on the nature of the problem being considered (e.g., gross and net ratios, age-specific ratios, ratios based on national education structure and standardized enrolment ratios), and some of these present problems in definition and interpretation. Conceptual and practical problems also arise owing to a lack of data and/or a non-correspondence of different sets of data. These problems are accentuated when geographical

43/ "America enters the eighties: some social indicators", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 543 (January 1981). This volume complements Social Indicators III (see foot-note 9).

44/ See the progress report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of international migration statistics (E/CN.3/1983/17), also submitted to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

45/ Trends and Characteristics of International Migration Since 1950, Demographic Studies No. 64 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.XIII.5).

disaggregation is called for (e.g., provinces or urban/rural). Another type of indicator developed by UNESCO is derived from estimating the effects of repetition and drop-out on the progression of students through a cycle of education. UNESCO recently issued a statistical study on the subject. 46/

46. An indicator showing projected educational attainment based on the current pattern of enrolment and wastage would be a particularly valuable tool for educational analysis and planning, and UNESCO has published a methodological study Towards a Methodology for Projecting Rates of Literacy and Educational Attainment (1979). However, such series have been calculated in only a few cases, for example, in Perspective Canada II. 47/

47. Within countries, indicators of educational attainment are frequently supplemented by series on educational qualifications. To develop these indicators on a consistent and reliable basis, a classification such as the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), recommended by UNESCO for international use, is needed. The principles of ISCED are being applied in the current round of population censuses, 48/ and have been suggested for use in household surveys. As data from these programmes become available, more detailed indicators in this field can be prepared at the national and international levels. In recent years, there has also been considerable work on developing more detailed measures of educational achievement than the literacy/illiteracy dichotomy. These measures necessarily involve some kind of standardized testing and scoring procedure to be applied with either an institution- or household-based selection of persons for examination. However, such testing programmes are necessarily highly culture-specific, and they have been developed and tested in only a few countries on a national basis.

48. The UNESCO Office of Statistics publishes various estimates and projections of educational series and related methodological studies. Recent publications on literacy and school enrolment are the following:

- (a) Estimates and Projections of Illiteracy, Current Studies and Research in Statistics, No. 29. (Paris, 1978);
- (b) Analysing and Projecting School Enrolment in Developing Countries: A Manual of Methodology, Statistical Reports and Studies (to be issued).

46/ Wastage in Primary and General Secondary Education: A Statistical Study of Trends and Patterns in Repetition and Drop-out (CSR-E-37) (Paris, UNESCO, 1980).

47/ Statistics Canada, Perspective Canada (Ottawa, 1977), p. 94.

48/ Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 67 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.XVII.8), paras. 2.151-2.179.

49. UNESCO also collects and publishes several series on public expenditure on education. Two main indicators are used: public expenditure on education in relation to gross national product, and in relation to all government expenditure. The consistency and comparability of these indicators are uncertain, however, owing to variations in concepts, definitions and sources. The dissemination and adoption by countries of the Classification of the Functions of Government, 49/ approved by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session, will be useful in improving the situation.

3. Earning activities and the inactive

50. The basic international recommendations in this area have been issued by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and are available in its compendium International Recommendations on Labour Statistics (Geneva, 1976). Many of these will be reviewed at the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians to be held in October 1982. FAO has also prepared a guide on Collecting Statistics of Agricultural Population and Employment. 50/ The guide pays particular attention to problems associated with the development of statistics and indicators relating to the work of women in rural areas and other disadvantaged population groups.

51. Indicators of the distribution of the male labour force by occupation and kind of economic activity are widely available, and are used at the national and international levels. Likewise, indicators of the participation of women in the labour force and their distribution by occupation and kind of economic activity are widely available, and are used in the developed countries. However, such data are generally considered unreliable in developing countries because of various conceptual and practical problems. These problems include the difficulty of collecting accurate data on women's activities in some social circumstances, and the ambiguity of the labour-force concept in rural areas of developing countries, where women undertake various productive but unpaid activities which may or may not be counted, in theory or in practice, as economic production. Extensive research and testing is under way at the national and international levels to try to clarify the conceptual issues and to develop improved statistics for indicators on this subject. The work of the United Nations in this field is described in paras. 23 and 24 above. ILO has undertaken a variety of quantitative studies and field research projects concerning women workers in connexion with the World Employment Programme. Among its documents and publications on the topic are the following:

- (a) Office for Women Workers' Questions, "Economic analysis of the participation rates of women" (Geneva, no date given), mimeo;
- (b) M. F. Loutfi, Rural Women: Unequal Partners in Development (Geneva, 1980);

49/ Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 70 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.XVII.17).

50/ Development Paper No. 7 (Rome, FAO, 1978).

- (c) C. Opping, "A synopsis of seven roles and status of women: an outline of conceptual and methodological issues", World Employment Programme working paper (Geneva, no date given), mimeo;
- (d) R. Anker and others, eds., Sex Discrimination and Sex Segregation in Urban Labour Markets of the Third World: Institutional and Family Considerations (Geneva, in press);
- (e) R. Anker and C. Opping, The Changing Economic Role of Women and its Inter-relationship to Demographic Variables in the Process of Development (Geneva, in press);
- (f) R. Anker and V. Bodrova, eds., Working Women in Socialist Countries: the Fertility Connection (Geneva, in press).

52. In the field of unemployment and under-employment, the situation as regards the comparability of data at the international level is not entirely satisfactory for the developed countries, and availability and comparability are unsatisfactory for most of the developing countries, particularly for rural populations. Series on under-employment are available for only a few developed and developing countries, and they are compiled using a variety of concepts and methods. ^{51/} The current situation is reviewed in a chapter prepared by ILO for the forthcoming revised United Nations Handbook of Household Surveys ^{52/} and will be discussed at the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

53. The ILO compendium International Recommendations on Labour Statistics also covers wages, hours of work, employee income and employment injuries, and ILO has recently issued An Integrated System of Wages Statistics: A Manual on Methods (Geneva, 1979). Data on these and other aspects of working conditions are available in a wide variety of countries. Many of the compendiums of social indicators in developed countries include measures of working conditions based on attitudes and appraisals of workers, as collected in household surveys, but very little information of this type is collected in developing countries.

4. Distribution of income, consumption and accumulation

54. The basic data and principal aggregates, series and classifications for selecting social indicators in this field, including redistribution through

^{51/} A review of these and several examples are given in National Commission on Employment and Unemployment Statistics, Counting the Labor Force, (Washington, 1979), and C. C. Clogg, Measuring Underemployment; Demographic Indicators for the United States (New York, Academic Press, 1979).

^{52/} See DP/UN/INT-79-020/2/Add.1 (internal Secretariat draft).

government taxes and transfers, are reviewed in Provisional Guidelines on Statistics of the Distribution of Income, Consumption and Accumulation of Households, 53/ which is part of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). One important aggregate measure discussed in the guidelines - total consumption of the population (i.e., the sum of private and certain public consumption expenditures benefiting households) - is the subject of continuing work in the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat. 54/ Future work on SNA is expected to address several unresolved issues of critical importance for social indicators in this field, namely, measurement and coverage of subsistence output and other household activities and socio-economic classification in the household sector. 55/

55. While there is intense interest in this field, at the national and international levels and among countries at all different stages of development and with different types of economic organization in statistics and indicators, the available series suffer from serious disadvantages which have been extensively reviewed in international studies. 56/ Various other approaches to the fundamental question of social equity are commonly used. 57/ Three of the most common are: (a) to focus on the adequacy of income and consumption in the lower portion of the income-distribution curve; (b) to make comparisons within countries in terms of socio-economic groups, variously defined, or geographical areas; and (c) to compare aggregate measures of income and consumption internationally, using purchasing-power parities and methods developed for this purpose in the United

53/ Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 61 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.XVII.11).

54/ See the report of the Secretary-General on total consumption of the population: technical report (E/CN.3/512 and Corr.1-2).

55/ See the report of the Secretary-General on the review and development of the System of National Accounts (SNA) (E/CN.3/1983/5), also submitted to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

56/ See, for example, Donald McGranahan, International Comparability of Statistics on Income Distribution, Report No. 79.6 (Geneva, UNRISD, 1979), and the conclusions of the informal meeting on relative income differences convened by the Economic Commission for Europe and the Conference of European Statisticians, (CES/WP.22/56) (April 1979, mimeo), reprinted in McGranahan.

57/ See, for example, those described by Wolf Scott in Concepts and Measurement of Poverty, Report No. 81.1 (Geneva, UNRISD, 1981). For a review of concepts and methods in relation to the national accounts and balances, see The Feasibility of Welfare-Oriented Measures to Supplement the National Accounts and Balances: A Technical Report, Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 22 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.XVII.12).

Nations International Comparison Project (ICP). ^{58/} These methods are used with many variations in most countries of the world, but wide differences in the detailed concepts and methods employed have precluded any meaningful international comparisons up to the present time. This situation can be expected to improve slowly but significantly over the next decade as (a) more and more household survey data become available, (b) the United Nations guidelines on income distribution statistics are progressively implemented and refined, and (c) the methods and data of ICP are fully developed.

56. In the area of household assets and accumulation, very few countries have collected comprehensive data. Physical measures of household ownership of housing and durable goods are available in many countries, and in developed countries they cover the primary assets of a large majority of households. However, equity in household enterprises, including land and cattle, is significant for certain socio-economic groups in most countries, and these groups may comprise a substantial proportion of the households in developing countries. Hence, this remains an area where the basic data are inadequate for indicators in most cases.

5. Social security and welfare services

57. Most countries with programmes of social security and social assistance compile data on the benefits distributed, but data relating to the characteristics of the beneficiaries are limited, and data on the scope of benefits related to total needs and the scope of effective protection (i.e., eligibility in case of need) are even more limited. Even the available series are rarely compiled on a systematic basis, but many countries are none the less able to prepare special analyses and indicators with at least estimates of general relevance. Several of these have been published in the 1977 Compendium of Social Statistics.

58. Among those taking a more systematic approach, France has prepared and issued social welfare accounts as a satellite account to its national accounts, ^{59/} and the European Community is preparing a revised general methodology of social protection statistics consistent with the European System of Accounts. ^{60/} The Community plans to publish these data annually. These systems provide a much more reliable basis for monetary indicators in this field, but they are not yet closely linked to the related population data.

^{58/} See the report of the Secretary-General on long-term organization of the International Comparison Project (ICP) (E/CN.3/1983/14), also submitted to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

^{59/} Les Comptes Satellites du SECN; Les Comptes de la protection sociale; Méthodes et Séries 1959-1978, Les Collections de l'INSEE, Series C, No. 82 (Paris, INSEE, 1979).

^{60/} Social Accounts; Accounts of Social Protection in the EC 1970-1975 (Brussels and Luxembourg, Statistical Office of the European Communities, 1977). Volumes covering 1970-1977 and a revised methodology are in preparation.

6. Health, health services and nutrition

59. Measures of life expectancy and infant mortality are among the most widely used of all social indicators of living conditions because of their wide availability, their good international comparability with most other indicators, and their universally accepted relevance to levels of living. Even where the underlying data are extremely weak in terms of coverage, frequency and reliability, it is usually possible with modern demographic methods to make at least occasional estimates with a higher degree of accuracy than in other social fields.

60. In the developed and in some developing countries, vital statistics provide a rich body of data for the selection of additional social indicators in this field. These can be disaggregated according to a fairly wide variety of social, demographic and geographical characteristics. Some causes of death also have important applications in social indicators concerning social conditions outside the field of health proper, for example, violent or accidental deaths and deaths, particularly among children, which can be linked to poor socio-economic conditions and malnutrition. In most developing countries there are many weaknesses in basic demographic data, but a considerable amount of data is available none the less. There is a strong general commitment to the regular and continued taking of population censuses in these countries, many of which took their first census only in the last 15 years, and to building up the vital statistics programmes. A large number of countries have also fielded sample surveys which have provided considerable new data on infant mortality. National surveys under the World Fertility Survey are in many cases important sources. As these basic data and their analysis continue to improve, ^{61/} the use of increasingly disaggregated mortality indicators can be expected to expand in developed and developing countries, with corresponding improvements in accuracy and detail.

61. The availability of data for indicators of morbidity, including impairments and handicaps, is much more limited. Data from administrative reporting systems on communicable and infectious diseases of public health importance are difficult to translate into general indicators of risk and incidence. For other morbidity conditions, administrative data are usually even more fragmentary or unorganized and, therefore, difficult to use for social indicators. On the other hand, more and more developed and developing countries are using household surveys to collect data on health status and nutrition, with particular emphasis on nutrition among children and mothers and on impairments and disabilities. Most of the available or recommended international indicators of health status are based on household surveys.

^{61/} For summaries of developments, see I. M. Moriyama, "Public health uses of mortality data" and W. Brass, "Paths and problems in the analysis of mortality differentials", Proceedings of the Meeting on Socio-economic Determinants and Consequences of Mortality, Mexico City, 19-25 June 1979 (New York and Geneva, United Nations and the World Health Organization, 1980).

62. Several measures of the supply of health services and facilities are widely available, particularly population-per-physician and per-hospital-bed and expenditures-per-capita, though the last is subject to methodological problems, as discussed under education (para. 49 above). None the less, it is generally recognized that these are to a large extent inadequate as measures of the quality, adequacy, availability and effectiveness of these services. Many countries now use household surveys to provide data for indicators of the access to and the use of services and facilities, and some over-all indicators of efficiency have been devised in a few countries. In particular, in developing countries, access to primary health-care services and the conditions of water supply and sanitary services for the housing stock are considered important aspects of the quality of public health services with a proven impact on health conditions. More broadly, maternal and infant death rates are useful measures of the quality and availability of associated health services.

63. In connexion with the Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000, launched by the World Health Assembly in 1979, the World Health Organization (WHO) has prepared a study of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the implementation and success of the Strategy at the national, regional and global levels. ^{62/} The study considers general social and economic indicators for health policy, provision of health care, coverage by primary health care and health status. In addition, a short list of 12 indicators for global monitoring and evaluation is recommended.

64. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization are working to improve statistical methods and international dissemination of statistics and indicators in the fields of nutrition and food consumption. Data and indicators concerning the food supply situation of countries are published regularly by FAO in Food Balance Sheets. As social indicators, these series have the disadvantage of not reflecting the distribution of food availability and the malnutrition and under-nutrition which may result. Data related to the latter and collected from food consumption and nutrition surveys are published periodically by FAO in Review of Food Consumption Surveys. These data, combined with anthropometric data on the nutritional status of children, are used to prepare the FAO World Food Survey, which essentially provides an assessment of the world food and nutrition situation on the basis of indicators of the levels and patterns of food consumption and nutrition, including estimates of the under-nourished population.

65. Since the Fourth World Food Survey was published in 1977, efforts have been made to expand and to bring up to date such an analysis as a contribution to ongoing FAO studies. It is planned to publish the Fifth World Food Survey in 1984. Continuing improvements and simplification of data collection methods include The Programme for Statistics on Food Consumption and Nutrition (FAO, 1981), the revision of the FAO/WHO scales of nutritional requirements in 1981/1982,

^{62/} Development of Indicators for Monitoring Health for All by the Year 2000 (Geneva, World Health Organization, 1981).

and the rapidly expanding use of household surveys. These developments should greatly improve the availability and suitability of data for indicators in this field in the medium-term future in those developing countries where under-nutrition or malnutrition is a public health problem.

7. Housing and environment

66. Population and housing censuses provide a wide range of statistics for indicators of the stock, characteristics and distribution of housing for most countries. The internationally recommended concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations for these censuses provide basic guidance for the data to be collected and tabulated. The recommendations and the available national data sources are summarized in the introductory chapters of the Compendium of Housing Statistics, 1975-1977. 63/ Additional guidance for indicators is available in Statistical Indicators of Housing Conditions. 64/

67. Indicators of housing construction and expenditure must be drawn largely from national sources of economic and construction statistics. These are of widely varying quality and frequency in developing countries, and in particular are usually inadequate or non-existent for the rural populations in these countries, where much of the housing may be produced on own-account from local materials. Some environmental aspects of housing are also covered in housing censuses, in particular water supply and sanitation services, and sources (but not quantities) of energy for heating and lighting. Indicators of these topics are widely compiled and used nationally and internationally for countries where the basic data are collected.

68. Other environmental aspects of housing and related services can be covered in household or village surveys, but this has been done on a large scale in only a few cases. For example, indicators of transport and communications are usually based on administrative or business sources and are seldom oriented towards the issues of access and use by households. Thus, series on telephones or pieces of mail per 1,000 population seldom distinguish business from household services; a series on radio or television receivers per 1,000 population is only an indirect and imperfect measure of the percentage of households with a radio or television; a series on cars per 1,000 population does not take into account the alternative forms of transportation which may be equally or more important in specific countries or areas, such as bicycles and public transport.

63/ Statistical Papers, Series N, No. 3 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.80.XVII.4).

64/ Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 37 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 62.XVII.7).

69. International guidelines and methods for environmental statistics generally are being developed by the United Nations and an international Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics is in preparation to succeed the Compendium of Housing Statistics.

8. Public order and safety

70. Very few data are published internationally. At the regional level, there is the Compendio de Estadísticas Criminales en Latinoamérica y el Caribe 1950-1977, prepared by the Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (San José, Costa Rica, Imprenta Nacional, 1979). However, the field is covered in most national indicator compendiums.

71. The development of crime trend measurements and the availability of statistics for the purpose are reviewed in a working paper prepared for the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders ^{65/} and in the International Review of Criminal Policy, No. 35. ^{66/} A comprehensive report, including world and regional indicators, was considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-second session, ^{67/} and a new report, based on information received from Governments for the quinquennium 1976-1980 and on the results of research carried out with the assistance of the United Nations institutes working in this area, will be submitted to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control in 1984. A report entitled "Measuring victimization" is to be published in 1982 by OECD. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is preparing indicator recommendations in this area, as is the Council of Europe's European Committee on Crime Problems (Strasbourg).

9. Time-use

72. Indicators of the use of time are valuable for monitoring and analysing a wide variety of issues, which include:

(a) Participation and productivity in economic and other productive activities;

(b) Changes in the organization of productive time owing, for example, to changes in technology;

(c) Extent and use of leisure time;

^{65/} Crime trends and crime prevention strategies: working paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/CONF.87/4 and Corr.1).

^{66/} United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.IV.5.

^{67/} Report of the Secretary-General on crime prevention and control (A/32/199).

(d) Male/female differences;

(e) Participation in education, family child care and other social, political and voluntary activities not considered immediately economically productive;

(f) Time lost in travel, queuing and the like.

73. The Statistical Commission considered a report on this subject at its twentieth session, 68/ and a revision of the report is being prepared. Statistical offices in several developed countries, including France, Hungary, Norway and Poland, have undertaken detailed national surveys of time-use, as has the Institute for Social Research of the University of Michigan in the United States of America. These countries have all included indicators of time-use in their social indicators compendiums.

74. In the developing countries, many time-use surveys have been carried out, but usually only on an experimental basis with a small, local sampling, and by a non-governmental research unit. Examples from Bangladesh, Botswana, Bulgaria and Peru are discussed in the progress report submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session, and additional examples will be discussed in the revised report.

75. A key element in designing a time-use survey and in compiling indicators from it is the activity classification. No such classification has been internationally recommended, but examples from the studies in Bangladesh and Poland and the Multinational Comparative Time-Budget Research Project 69/ are given in the Secretary-General's progress report. OECD has proposed an indicator in this field, and a technical report entitled "Measuring the use of time" is to be published in 1982.

10. Leisure and culture

76. UNESCO is developing a framework for cultural statistics, 70/ conceived as part of the United Nations framework for social and demographic statistics. A tentative classification of cultural areas or spheres has been drawn up for the framework: cultural heritage, printed material and literature, music, performing arts, pictorial and plastic arts, cinema and photography, broadcasting, socio-cultural activities, sports and games, and nature and environment. In the

68/ Progress Report of the Secretary-General on the development of statistics of time-use, (E/CN.3/519).

69/ A. Szalai, ed., The Use of Time: Daily Activities of Urban and Suburban Populations in Twelve Countries: Report on the Multinational Comparative Time-Budget Research Project (The Hague, Mouton, 1972).

70/ See "Preliminary study on the scope and coverage of a framework for cultural statistics" (CES/AC.44/8) (Paris, UNESCO, 8 March 1979).

framework, corresponding time-budgets of individuals are foreseen for all categories, computed on the basis of household surveys on access to cultural resources and on participation in cultural activities. 71/

77. At a joint meeting on cultural statistics, held at Geneva from 9 to 12 April 1979, under the aegis of UNESCO and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the UNESCO framework for cultural statistics and the results of testing of parts of it at the national level was discussed. Another joint UNESCO/ECE meeting will be held in 1983 to take stock of the results of the programme on cultural statistics and indicators and to finalize the framework for cultural statistics before it is proposed for application at the international level.

78. The creation of the European Cultural Data Bank was among the recommendations of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. In 1978, representatives of the European member States recommended that the UNESCO Office of Statistics should develop the statistical component of the projected data bank within its own data bank. Repertories of cultural statistics and indicators for a number of European countries have been drawn up for inclusion in the projected bank.

79. The UNESCO General Conference, at its twenty-first session, adopted the Recommendation on the International Standardization of Statistics of Public Expenditure on Cultural Activities. The first comprehensive international survey of public expenditure on cultural activities will be carried out by UNESCO in 1982. The percentage of that expenditure in global public expenditure is considered an important indicator of cultural policy and planning.

11. Social stratification and mobility

80. The classification of the population into socio-economic groups (see para. 18 above) can be used to calculate a variety of indicators of social stratification and socio-economic organization. In Social Indicators: Preliminary Guidelines and Illustrative Series the following topics are identified as important for the selection of indicators in this field: (a) socio-economic organization; (b) changes in socio-economic organization; (c) inter-generational socio-economic mobility; and (d) intra-generational socio-economic mobility. Appropriate statistics and indicators for this area were discussed in a paper prepared for the Working Group on the Framework for Social and Demographic Statistics, 72/ and

71/ An example of a household survey questionnaire for studying access and participation has been developed by UNESCO and is currently being field-tested in Indonesia.

72/ Economic Commission for Europe, Conference of European Statisticians, "Statistics for the study of the socio-economic structure and social mobility of the population in the context of FSDS: memorandum by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office" (CES/WP.34/27).

numerous other studies and indicators concerning these topics have been prepared at the national and international levels. Relatively few series have been included in international compendiums, but some examples can be found in the national compendiums of Brazil, France and the United States of America.

12. Other fields

81. Among the topics covered in the various national compendiums, but not in the United Nations Social Indicators: Preliminary Guidelines and Illustrative Series, are special population groups, environment, and social and political participation. The methodological aspects of compiling indicators of special population groups have been reviewed in United Nations publications (see Studies in the Integration ...), but their application in individual countries is highly dependent on the interest and circumstances of each. With the exception of data on women, relatively few indicators of this type are compiled internationally.

82. In the field of environment, except for human settlements (see paras. 67 and 68 above), the situation is similar. Considerable methodological work is proceeding nationally and internationally (see para. 69 above), but relatively few indicators are available internationally, and usually for only a few developed countries.

83. In the area of social and political participation, indicators of political and civil rights, political and economic discrimination, potential separatism, voter turnout, party fractionalization and organized labour have been compiled for the third edition of the World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators. ^{73/}

B. Co-ordination of international activities

84. Co-ordination of international work on social and related economic and environment indicators has four objectives:

(a) Co-ordination of work on concepts and methods in order to ensure comprehensiveness and consistency in international recommendations, guidelines and related technical documentation on indicators;

(b) Promotion of the development and application of concepts and methods of particular relevance to the selection and compilation of indicators for general and multi-disciplinary uses;

(c) Maximum exchange of programme information and experience in order to ensure the effective dissemination and utilization of research findings and to prevent programme overlapping and duplication;

^{73/} Charles Lewis Taylor and others (in preparation). A somewhat different set is presented in the second edition, C. L. Taylor and M. C. Hudson (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1972).

(d) Co-ordination of international statistical collection and dissemination activities related to indicators in order to ensure consistency in international use of international standards in the series collected and disseminated and to prevent any overlapping or duplication of requests to countries for statistics.

85. As the various fields of indicators cover a wide range of specialties and many of these fall within the competence of the specialized agencies, particularly FAO, ILO, UNESCO and WHO, it is essential to ensure an integrated approach. Progress reports are submitted annually to the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat and by the specialized agencies active in general indicators programmes. Programme plans and outputs, such as those discussed in sections II and III.A above, and comments on these, are exchanged widely on a regular basis, with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat as a focal point. The Statistical Office is taking a leading role in the development of statistics and indicators of the situation of women, in close collaboration with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (see paras. 23 and 24 above). This programme provides an additional opportunity for the Statistical Office to promote a close collaboration among the concerned international organizations on this and related topics.
