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DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS: POPULATION AND
HOUSING CENSUSES; SOCIAL STATISTICS AND INDICATORS; HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS STATISTICS

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF METHODOLOGICAL WORK

General development and integration of methodological work,
including experience and progress made in international
classifications

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The main purpose of the present report is to keep the Commission informed of developments in methodological work in certain fields that are important but that do not call for separate documents at this time. The document thus describes methodological work in the areas of international classifications (paras. 4-16), energy (paras. 17-26), international trade and transport statistics, including the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) (paras. 27-38), the 1990 round of population and housing censuses (paras. 39-54), housing and human settlements statistics (paras. 55-62) and statistical programmes for social indicators (paras. 63-71). Points for discussion are also presented (para. 72).

* E/CN.3/1991/1.

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its twenty-fourth session, in 1987, the Statistical Commission expressed concern at the amount of documentation proposed for the twenty-fifth session. 1/ In response to that concern, the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination, at its twelfth session, agreed that the new agenda item, entitled "General development and integration of methodological work", could usefully accommodate reporting on areas where no major discussion was expected, but for which the Commission needed to be kept informed of developments (E/CN.3/1989/20, para. 34). At its twenty-fifth session, the Commission had before it a document describing the methodological and related work in the areas of industrial, energy and international trade and transport statistics, population and housing censuses, and containing an overview of the scope and coverage of the methodological work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, including an indication of resource allocations (E/CN.3/1989/15). At its twenty-fifth session, the Statistical Commission took note of the report and agreed that comments by members of the Commission should be submitted in writing to the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat for subsequent consideration by the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination at its thirteenth session. The Commission requested a further report on the subject for consideration at its twenty-sixth session, in 1991. 2/ At its thirteenth session, in 1989, the Working Group considered the comments submitted by members of the Statistical Commission (see E/CN.3/1991/2, paras. 69-73). The Working Group considered that the present document served well the purpose of keeping the Commission informed of developments in methodological work in certain fields that were important but that did not call for separate documents at this time (E/CN.3/1991/2, para. 48). The Working Group also determined the subjects that were to be covered by the present report (see E/CN.3/1991/2, paras. 34, 35, 38, 47, 48 and 73).

2. The various sections of the present report are to be considered under specific agenda items as follows:

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>
I. Summary review of the methodological work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat	10. General development and integration of methodological work
II. A. International classifications	10. General development and integration of methodological work
II. B. Energy statistics	10. General development and integration of methodological work

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<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>
II. C. International trade and transport statistics, including the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA)	10. General development and integration of methodological work
II. D. Population and housing censuses	9 (a). Population and housing censuses
II. E. Housing and human settlements statistics	9 (f). Human settlements statistics
II. F. Statistical programmes for social indicators	9 (c). Social statistics and indicators

I. SUMMARY REVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGICAL WORK PROGRAMME OF THE
STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

3. The development of concepts, definitions, classifications and methods of data collection and dissemination is one of the subprogrammes of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat. Some of the documents before the Commission treat predominantly methodological questions, notably those on the review of the System of National Accounts (SNA) (agenda item 4 (a)). Other areas also address methodological issues as part of the efforts to improve data collection and dissemination, in particular in the areas of service statistics (agenda item 6), price statistics (agenda item 7), social statistics and indicators (agenda item 9 (c)), environment statistics (agenda item 9 (e)) and as part of the National Household Survey Capability Programme (agenda item 11 (b)). Methodological development in the areas listed in paragraph 2 above are described in section II. A summary review and indication of resources allocated overall to the methodological work of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat is contained in the note by the Secretary-General on the proposed work programme of the Statistical Office for 1992-1993, including relevant information on the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (E/CN.3/1991/30).

II. ONGOING AND FUTURE WORK IN SELECTED AREAS

A. International classifications

Introduction

4. At its twenty-fifth session, the Statistical Commission approved the final draft of the revised International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), Rev.3, and the provisional Central Product Classification (CPC), modified to take into account comments by the Commission. 3/ The Commission requested that both classifications be published, with the necessary amendments, and that CPC also include draft explanatory notes for its services

part. 4/ In discussing the final draft of ISIC, Rev.3, the Commission emphasized the need for the definitions of the statistical units in ISIC, Rev.3, taking into account the different time-frame for the revision of SNA, to be in conformity with the definitions to be adopted in the revised SNA. 5/

(a) Finalization of ISIC, Rev.3, for publication

5. In accordance with the instructions given by the Commission at its twenty-fifth session, a number of amendments were introduced in the final draft of ISIC, Rev.3, for publication. 6/ These amendments included:

(a) Refining the titles of some ISIC categories, mostly in the manufacturing part;

(b) Clarifying the explanatory notes, especially for the construction industry and some service industries; in construction, a specification on how to deal with repair activities was introduced; in retail trade, the distinction between sales by stores and other sales modes and the classification of sales of goods manufactured by the same unit were clarified; the explanatory notes for "Research and development" were revised according to a proposal from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the delimitation of research and development activities from similar activities classified elsewhere was improved.

6. Subsequent to the twenty-fifth session of the Statistical Commission, the definition of the statistical units was discussed at the Expert Group Meeting on SNA Co-ordination held at New York in July 1989. The Expert Group attached high importance to the full consistency between SNA and ISIC in respect of statistical units. 7/ In discussing criteria relevant to defining the statistical units, the Expert Group considered homogeneity of economic activities carried out in a unit and homogeneity of location as the most important criteria. Data availability or record keeping (existence of production accounts) was considered important mostly in adapting the ideal (theoretical) definitions to real world circumstances (operational concepts). The Group considered that independence or autonomy of decision should not play a preponderant role in the definition of the establishment, in part because those elements were difficult to define. The Group considered, however, that independence should be included as a criterion in the definition of the enterprise which may be defined as the smallest independent legal entity (institutional unit of SNA). For the description of the different units, the Expert Group recommended that both theoretical and operational definitions, the latter reflecting real world circumstances, be included in ISIC, Rev.3, and SNA. The introduction to ISIC, Rev.3, was amended in light of those recommendations.

7. To facilitate the implementation and use of ISIC, Rev.3, the ISIC publication includes detailed correspondence tables of ISIC, Rev.2, into ISIC, Rev.3, and vice versa. These tables are intended to provide a standard interpretation to countries undertaking the transition from ISIC, Rev.2, to ISIC, Rev.3. The tables have been developed in such a way that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the categories of ISIC, Rev.2, and those of ISIC, Rev.3. As ISIC, Rev.3, is more detailed than ISIC, Rev.2, an additional fifth-digit breakdown of ISIC, Rev.3, and

fifth- and sixth-digit breakdowns of ISIC, Rev.2, categories were introduced to allow complete convertibility between the two revisions. These tables may assist countries in carrying out the coding and/or estimation needed for making the transition from ISIC, Rev.2, to ISIC, Rev.3, and provide a methodology that might be adapted by countries for developing the correspondence table between ISIC, Rev.3, and their national activity classifications.

(b) Finalization of the provisional CPC for publication

8. Work on finalizing the provisional CPC for publication has continued. This work has consisted mainly of revising the explanatory notes to the services part of CPC. Parts of these notes had been circulated at the twenty-fifth session of the Statistical Commission as a background document (informal note 2) and some other parts have been developed since then. Subsequently, comments were received from countries, some in the context of the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics at its 4th meeting at Ottawa in October 1989.

9. The introduction to CPC was revised in response to the comments received. In particular, information was incorporated on the distinction between goods and services in the case of compound products such as restaurant services, which have both a goods and a service component.

10. The interpretative rules of CPC have been finalized in line with the position taken by the Statistical Commission at its twenty-fifth session when it agreed that, for transportable goods, those rules should not differ even slightly from the rules of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) of the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC). 8/ New draft rules for the services part of CPC were developed with major input from CCC, applying classification principles (classification in the most specific CPC category; classification by main component) to services that are already being used for transportable goods. These have been incorporated in the CPC publication.

11. A number of changes were introduced in the classification and the explanatory notes for the services part of CPC in order to improve the classification structure, the definition of the scope of CPC categories and delimitation between similar kinds of services and to introduce recent developments on service statistics, as follows:

(a) For some service industries, both structure and explanatory notes were revised. For example, under division 51, the subdivision for "installation work" was revised in order to better reflect the actual output structure of the industry. Division 53, "Land", was aligned with the Standard Statistical Classification of Land Use of the Economic Commission for Europe (CES/637), which was approved by the Conference of European Statisticians. 9/ Possible wider utilization of this classification, including possible use at the world level, is being discussed (see E/CN.3/1991/22). The scope of division 94 was tentatively broadened by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat to include environmental protection services reflecting the latest developments on an SNA satellite system of integrated economic-environmental accounting, which is being developed by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in co-operation with the World Bank and other organizations;

(b) A more detailed and modern breakdown for group 752, "Telecommunications services", was introduced in response to a proposal received at the meeting of the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics held at Ottawa in October 1989.

12. A proposal concerning the detailed breakdown of division 81, "Financial intermediation services and auxiliary services therefor", is under study. The proposal involves a breakdown of division 81 according to basic functions such as intermediation, portfolio management, exchange of instruments and advising or counselling, followed by a subdivision according to financial instruments. This represents a different treatment as compared to the treatment of financial intermediation and related auxiliary activities as presented in ISIC, Rev.3.

13. Following the decision taken by the Statistical Commission at its twenty-fifth session, work on the development of correspondence tables among ISIC, Rev.3, the provisional CPC, the Standard International Trade Classification, Rev.3 (SITC, Rev.3) and HS is under way. The correspondence tables will consist of sorted listings of each of the four classifications, showing the correspondence with the other three. The tables are intended to link the four classifications and to meet important user needs in relating activity, product and specific foreign trade classifications. The correspondence tables will facilitate the integration of different kinds of statistics and make possible a computerized recompilation of data from one product classification to another. These correspondence tables will be made available in a printed form (a sales publication) and in a software version on PC diskettes.

(c) Proposals for future work on international economic classifications

14. The following activities related to the implementation and use of ISIC, Rev.3, and CPC and work on other economic classifications are envisaged:

(a) Preparation of commodity indexes for ISIC, Rev.3, and CPC using SITC, Rev.3, index for the transportable goods part of CPC;

(b) Preparation of the correspondence table between ISIC, Rev.3, and the Classification of Branches of the National Economy (CBNE) of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). This work will be of particular importance in the light of recent developments in member countries of CMEA which are showing increasing interest in using ISIC parallel to CBNE;

(c) Revision of the Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) 10/ on the basis of the ongoing work on the revision of SNA and other recent developments;

(d) Provision of technical co-operation to countries in implementing and using the new classifications, e.g., in the form of workshops or advisory services advising on how to adapt the new classifications to individual country circumstances.

15. The schedule for completion of these activities will depend on the availability of resources in the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat.

(d) Points for discussion

16. Points for discussion are set out in paragraph 72 (b).

B. Energy statistics

1. Publications

17. Work began in late 1989 on the preparation of a companion volume to the original methodological publication of the United Nations in energy statistics, namely, Concepts and Methods in Energy Statistics, with Special Reference to Energy Accounts and Balances: A Technical Report (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/29). 11/ This work was originally scheduled for the 1986-1987 biennium, but was delayed as consultancy funds were withdrawn owing to the financial crisis. With funds reallocated, the work was resumed, and a first draft of the volume has been received from the consultant.

18. The Concepts and Methods technical report mentioned above was drafted in 1978 and approved by an expert group meeting convened at New York from 6 to 14 March 1978. 12/ The technical report was intended to give a historical overview of the growth of energy statistics subsequent to the petroleum crisis of 1973. It also attempted to present viable approaches for the preparation of country energy balances. It has been used in many countries and is still in demand. However, much has occurred in this field since the mid-1970s and a working handbook for developing countries is essential.

19. The companion volume will update the original version where applicable, but will be prepared with the idea of serving as a working document or manual for developing countries to improve their energy statistics methodologies and data compilation activities along established international guidelines. It will be geared primarily towards methods of producing commodity statistics, with energy balances as the final result.

20. Additional material to that which was included in the Concepts and Methods technical report will include (a) an expanded treatment of traditional fuels and biomass, which are especially important for developing countries, and (b) a special section on microcomputer use and current software packages suitable for energy statistics use. This new technical report is not intended to replace the original Concepts and Methods technical report but will serve as a companion working document or manual to the more historically oriented original report.

2. Meetings attended

21. The Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat participated in the Energy Balance Methodology Workshop, organized by the International Energy Agency (IEA) at Paris in November 1989. The Workshop discussed the basic structure of the energy balances, use of satellite balances, dissemination of data, methodological problems related to calorific values, and treatment of heat, petrochemical feedstocks, traditional fuels and primary electricity. The Workshop was followed

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by a meeting of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics (comprising the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), IEA, the Statistical Office of the European Economic Community (EUROSTAT), which concentrated its efforts towards further harmonization of definitions, questionnaires and methodology in energy statistics.

3. Future plans

22. A Workshop on Petroleum Statistics is planned to be held at Moscow in April 1991. It will be organized by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat in conjunction with the State Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Statistics, with substantive support from the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat. The Workshop will have national statistical capability-building as a basic objective.

23. The immediate objectives of the Workshop are:

(a) To provide a forum for representatives of statistical offices or other national data-gathering agencies of countries in the regions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to discuss the problems related to gathering reliable petroleum statistics, with special reference to end-use consumption;

(b) To acquaint the national producers of energy statistics with the concepts and definitions devised by the United Nations and to develop proposals for improving the collection and compilation of reliable petroleum statistics;

(c) To identify gaps in petroleum statistics (especially information such as prices, costs, value of exploration activities) and suggest possible approaches to filling those gaps;

(d) To promote further the development of regionally and internationally comparable petroleum statistics.

24. The outputs of the project will be the technical papers prepared by the participants and the Secretariat experts, as well as the report of the Workshop itself. The results of the Workshop will be reported to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-seventh session for consideration of possible follow-up actions. In addition, it is anticipated that a technical report, based on the results of the Workshop, will be prepared. The technical report will emphasize the further development and harmonization of methods, concepts, definitions and classifications of petroleum statistics, in physical as well as value terms. It will be primarily geared towards the needs of developing countries to improve their energy data collection activities in the petroleum sector.

25. The Workshop will provide an impetus to the development of petroleum statistics in national statistical organizations or other agencies which may then act as focal points in the production of integrated petroleum statistics for their country. In adopting uniform definitions and methodologies for data collection and

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compilation, national statistical offices or other agencies can be expected to produce reliable petroleum statistics that are comparable both over time and across countries.

4. Points for discussion

26. Points for discussion are set out in paragraph 72 (c).

C. International trade and transport statistics, including the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA)

1. Commodity indexes to the Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 3 (SITC, Rev.3)

27. Work continued on methodological development and publications consequent to the revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC). Commodity indexes to SITC, Rev.3, will be issued in two volumes. Volume I is planned for completion by the end of March 1991. It incorporates lists of commodities in alphabetical order under the most detailed headings of SITC, Rev.3. Volume II, which lists all commodities in alphabetical order, is expected to be completed by the end of June 1991. Drafts of various sections have been circulated to concerned organizations for technical review.

2. Methods used in compiling the United Nations price indexes for external trade

28. Volume I of this publication was published in 1987 (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/82) 13/ and contains a description of the methods used in the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in compiling the price indexes of primary commodities and non-ferrous base metals. Volume II will contain descriptions of methods used by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in compiling the unit value (or price) and quantum indexes, where appropriate, of exports of manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, imports of fuels and exports and imports of total merchandise of market economies by regions. Considerable progress has been made in 1990 and a completed draft of volume II now exists and is under technical review.

3. Interregional Workshop on External Trade Statistics

29. An Interregional Workshop on External Trade Statistics was held at Accra, from 27 November to 8 December 1989. The Workshop was organized by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat, with substantive support from the Statistical Office. Additional resource persons were provided by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. There were 26 participants. Discussions focused on the computerization of international trade statistics in countries using microcomputers

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and software packages especially developed for that purpose by UNCTAD (the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA)). The Workshop also examined SITC, Rev.3, and its relationship to other international commodity classifications and considered methods of unit value and quantum index number construction, paying particular attention to practical problems. In addition, the Workshop considered CADET, a software package developed by the European Economic Community (EEC) for analysing customs data on external trade.

4. New projects

30. Research is at present being carried out on possible improvement in country coverage of the export price index for machinery and transport equipment for selected countries. Library research is under way on country practices in compiling international trade statistics, including price/unit value and quantum indexes, as a first step leading to a planned future publication on country practices in trade statistics.

5. International sea-borne trade statistics

31. In accordance with requests made by the Statistical Commission at previous sessions, the Department for International Economic and Social Affairs is pursuing extrabudgetary funds from a variety of sources to support this area of work. 14/ To date the efforts have not been successful. Work has continued, using regular budget resources as available, to collect limited statistical data of goods loaded and unloaded in sea-borne trade based on questionnaires sent to countries. By agreement, these data have been provided to UNCTAD as a basis for UNCTAD to compile world tables. The 1986 Yearbook of International Sea-borne Trade Statistics (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.D/86) 15/ was also completed on the same resource base.

6. Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) 16/

32. ASYCUDA was established in 1981 to facilitate customs procedures and improve trade by introducing computerization into customs management. Twenty-four countries are already operating or are implementing ASYCUDA, more than 26 are in the final stages of negotiation and many more have shown interest.

33. ASYCUDA was specifically designed to address the special needs and conditions of customs in developing countries. Its main objectives are (a) to control the flow of goods from arrival to customs clearance by handling customs declarations, trade licensing controls, cargo movement monitoring and accounting procedures, and (b) to produce statistical data automatically.

34. In addition to funds provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), funding for project development and implementation has also been provided by the Governments of Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Other funding has come from EEC, the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank.

35. The current version 2 of the software, which was designed for microcomputers within local area networks, has been redeveloped to include new functions and introduce standard codes, notably for future use in trade data interchange. This improved edition is scheduled for release in April 1990. A new version (3.0) is being written in "C" language, under the UNIX operating system, in order to ensure full compatibility with all computers, from micros to mainframes. The technical development of ASYCUDA is guided and supervised by a working group composed of representatives of UNCTAD, the ECE International Trade Centre, EEC, the World Bank, the Customs Co-operation Council, the International Maritime Organization and the customs administrations of France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

36. From the outset, the ASYCUDA software incorporated three data bases covering financial, economic and customs statistics. This facility enabled the user to monitor financial and physical flows such as foreign trade and duties and taxes and to present them in pre-customized formats.

37. A special extraction module has been added to version 2. It includes a highly sophisticated selection facility which permits the detailed extraction of data elements such as time series, and their conversion to ASCII files. This new tool should make it easier for countries to transmit their trade data to international institutions. Furthermore, the data extracted and processed by the system can be used by most statistical packages for further analysis and aggregation. Data collected by ASYCUDA can then be disseminated and used by national institutions other than customs services.

7. Points for discussion

38. Points for discussion are set out in paragraph 72 (c).

D. Population and housing censuses

1. Activities since the twenty-fifth session of the Statistical Commission

39. With the completion of the report on Supplementary Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, 17/ the work of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat focused on the preparation of census training materials and technical co-operation activities to assist countries in carrying out quality censuses. The focus was specially on improving statistics concerning the economically active population, special population groups and small areas. A series of workshops on economic topics was therefore carried out jointly with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the regional commissions to exchange information on the new ILO standards for the measurement of the economically active population and revised industrial and occupational classifications, as well as to consider ways of implementing them in future censuses and surveys.

40. The Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat also plans, as part of the above-mentioned series of workshops, to hold a Workshop on Economic Statistics in Population and Housing Censuses (Moscow, 21-30 November 1990), for which the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the State Committee of the USSR on Statistics will serve as host. Further, an Interregional Workshop on Planning, Organization and Administration of Large-scale Demographic and Social Data Collection Activities for Small Areas (Bangkok, 20-24 November 1989) was organized by the Statistical Office and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat, in collaboration with ESCAP, to consider new advances and innovative aspects relating to various phases of census-taking that would improve the quality, timeliness and utilization of data at all levels.

41. At the regional level, intensive preparations, including census meetings, seminars and training workshops were carried out to promote cost-effective censuses in the 1990s. ECE organized, in co-operation with the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal Statistical Office, a Seminar on the Relevance and Importance of Population and Housing Census Data (Wiesbaden, 24-28 April 1989). The seminar noted that in virtually all countries of the ECE region, population and housing censuses constituted a corner-stone of the national statistical information system. It also noted that only a few countries have the technical and legal instruments to allow population registers and other administrative sources to be used to gather the same amount of information as censuses. Further, it stressed the role of technological changes in the dissemination of census results and pointed out that printed publications could be supplemented by microfiches, user tapes, diskettes and laser discs to facilitate the utilization of census results by users outside the statistical office. ECE plans in the coming years to study the costing aspects of population and housing censuses and to convene a series of meetings on the following subjects: (a) recent developments in census data dissemination; (b) developments in and plans for census products directed towards users' needs and (c) uses made of census data. It also intends to organize among ECE countries an exchange of census questionnaires and other relevant information on censuses and to publish a statistical volume containing basic tables from the 1990 round of population and housing censuses in the ECE region.

42. Intensive preparations were similarly undertaken by ESCAP at the regional and subregional levels. They included the following publications: Censuses of Population and Housing in Asia and the Pacific towards the 1990 Round 17/ and the revised Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses in Asia and the Pacific. 17/ In addition, a number of meetings and workshops were organized at the regional and subregional levels. Notable among them are the Working Group on Software Packages for Censuses and Surveys (Bangkok, 15-21 November 1988), the Workshop on Computer-Assisted Coding (Christchurch, 17-21 April 1989) and the Workshop on Economic Classifications for Population Censuses and Surveys (Bangkok, 30 April-4 May 1990).

43. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) promoted horizontal co-operation and organized a series of seminars to support the 1990 round of censuses. These included, in addition to the two seminars on census

organization and cartography that took place in 1988, the following four seminars during 1989, on: (a) content and design of census forms (Rio de Janeiro, 13-19 March 1989), (b) use of sampling during the preparation and utilization of census information (Buenos Aires, 18-21 April 1989), (c) computer systems for user access to census information (Santiago, 12-15 September 1989) and (d) training of field personnel (Havana, 7-10 November 1989). Further, two seminars took place during 1990 on (a) computer systems for the processing of census data (Caracas, 20 May-1 June 1990) and (b) post census evaluation and use of master samples (Cartagena, 4-8 June 1990).

44. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) focused its work on building up institutional capabilities in census-taking and provided technical support to 22 countries in various aspects of censuses through 40 short-term advisory missions. The missions undertaken to countries were mainly in the area of data processing as most countries have critical problems to resolve. Also, a number of missions were completed in cartography and census organization to assist national census offices in preparing for their 1990 censuses. The other aspects covered by these missions included census project development and needs assessment. In addition, ECA organized a Training Workshop in Census Cartography (Nairobi, 8-19 May 1989) and a Training Workshop on Economic Activity Topics in Population Censuses (Addis Ababa, November 1989), in collaboration with ILO and the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat. Two additional training workshops, on (a) census cartography and (b) use of software packages for census data analysis, are planned for 1990.

45. At the national level, most countries have begun their preparations for the 1990 round. Sixty-seven countries or areas have already taken a census during the period 1985-1989. Nineteen of them are in Africa, 15 in Asia, 13 in Europe and the Soviet Union, 16 in Oceania, 2 in North America and two in South America. However, the majority of population and housing censuses are anticipated to take place during the two years 1990-1991, and indications are that roughly 65 countries or areas will hold censuses in 1990 and another 42 in 1991. A listing of countries and the planned or actual dates of their censuses will be made available prior to the Commission.

2. Methodological developments and issues

46. The 1990 census round will witness the introduction of many developments and new technology, including microcomputers for data processing and dissemination. To assist countries in this regard, the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat plans to publish a series of technical reports and manuals on this subject. It has recently submitted for publication a Manual on Population Census Data Processing Using Microcomputers, 17/ which deals with issues involved in selecting appropriate methods and techniques in the light of specific needs of countries regarding data processing.

47. Further, an Interregional Workshop on Population Data Bases and Related Topics (Voorburg, 6-10 November 1989) was convened by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat with the support of the Department of Technical Co-operation

for Development, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Netherlands. The Workshop emphasized that publishing a series of reports presenting many tabulations is no longer sufficient. Users expect that the data will continue to be readily available for analysis and investigation of new phenomena as they arise. The census offices may find it difficult to fulfil such expectations by merely keeping a large set of data on magnetic tapes (which, in some cases may be poorly documented) or on microfilms that are difficult to disseminate efficiently and not easy to utilize by users. Therefore, the possibility of establishing census data bases aimed at efficient dissemination of unpublished as well as published data assumes importance for consideration in the context of 1990 censuses and emerging new technology.

48. Statistical data bases, because of their varied uses and the different characteristics of data involved, require rather different technical considerations from other commercial data bases. Therefore, the software products that serve commercial data bases may not be adequate for the statistical data bases without careful studies on the requirements of the statistical data bases and the capabilities of the software. However, the potential usefulness of the commercially available data base software for disseminating tabulated data (published or unpublished) cannot be ignored because of their wide availability, low cost, relative ease of use and the advanced capabilities of some of them.

49. The interregional workshop mentioned above (para. 47) attempted to identify the technical requirements of such software and observed demonstrations of commercially available data base software. The Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat plans to conduct another workshop on population census data bases in late 1990, focusing again on the methodology of developing population census data bases in the developing countries for improving data dissemination and utilization.

50. Another type of census data base, namely, a data base of micro records or unit records consisting of information on individual returns, was also discussed at the workshop and the software known as REDATAM was introduced. REDATAM was developed by the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) of ECLAC, with support from UNFPA and the International Development Research Centre of Canada, and is considered quite effective for exploring and establishing a census data base. It was reported that entire census data could be stored in a small number of laser optical disks (CD-ROM) not in the original format but in a processed format known as transposed format. Such disks (individual records) could be easily forwarded to users who themselves would retrieve data for geographic units of interest and make simple cross-tabulation. The approach seemed to give an attractive alternative to the census data bases of tabulated data. There was a reservation, however, that the approach would require advanced expertise, which is lacking in many countries. This issue will also be examined further in future workshops.

3. Census training and other activities

51. Since 1985, a number of census training and other technical co-operation activities have been undertaken to assist developing countries in carrying out improved censuses in the 1990 round. They generally included the following major areas: (a) provision of technical advisory services through country, regional or interregional advisers; (b) provision of training through fellowships and study tours and (c) provision of funds for the purchase of equipment. These forms of technical co-operation were supported by UNFPA and, within the United Nations, were executed by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, with substantive support from the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, or by the regional commissions. The advisory services covered all aspects of censuses, including planning, cartography, pre-tests, pilot tests, tabulation plans, data processing and preparation of census reports. These activities are expected to continue subject to the availability of funds from UNFPA and other international agencies (see, also, E/CN.3/1991/25).

52. With respect to census training, the large programme for the sub-Saharan African region that began in 1987 with funds provided by the Canadian International Development Agency and UNFPA gained momentum. Thus, in 1989, in addition to the two subregional training workshops on cartography and economic topics mentioned in paragraph 44 above, eight national training courses were conducted in various sub-Saharan countries. Furthermore, international fellowships were awarded for advanced training in sampling at Statistics Canada in English and French in alternate years. As part of this continuing programme, 11 national training courses are planned for 1990 dealing with census organization, cartography, data processing and analysis.

53. The experiences of countries that have already completed a 1990 census has pointed to several critical areas requiring further technical support. These include the need for strengthening national capability for carrying out post-enumeration surveys and other evaluation studies, improved dissemination and timely response to the demands of users for specialized and small area statistics. Also, many aspects of housing censuses require technical support, as does the integration of census data with other statistical sources and surveys. New developments and methodologies in the above-mentioned areas call for increased international co-operation and sharing of experience among countries in the timely resolving of many intricate problems and issues in fostering cost-effective censuses in the future.

4. Points for discussion

54. Points for discussion are set out in paragraph 72 (d).

E. Housing and human settlements statistics

1. Methodological work

55. Since the twenty-first session of the Statistical Commission, when the question of human settlements statistics was last discussed, the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat has undertaken the following methodological work:

(a) Collaborated with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS) to convene an expert group meeting on human settlements statistics at Nairobi from 12 to 16 October 1987. The meeting reviewed extensively data needs in the field of human settlements statistics, discussed general issues and made specific recommendations concerning the further development of the Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics 1983 (ST/ESA/STAT.SER.N/4). 18/ It endorsed the plans of UNCHS and the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat for the future international compilation, dissemination and analysis of human settlements statistics, recommended measures to improve national and international co-ordination between users and producers of statistics and stressed technical co-operation in support of national shelter strategies; 19/

(b) Published a technical report in 1986 entitled Concepts and Methods for Integrating Social and Economic Statistics on Health, Education and Housing (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/40). 20/ The report is one in a series of reports issued by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat on the integration and improvement of social, demographic and related statistics. Chapter VII of the report (Integration of Statistics on Housing and Human Settlements) is devoted to exploring ways by which data on housing and human settlements can be linked with data on social and economic circumstances of households and to analysing practical problems of possible integration.

56. As one of the consequences of the review of outputs and resources consequent to the financial crisis, no methodological work in this field is planned for the 1990-1991 biennium. However, realizing the importance of developing statistical concepts and methods as a fundamental component of any strategy to improve housing and human settlements statistics, the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat envisages further work in the future, depending on the availability of resources, on harmonizing and standardizing definitions and concepts in housing and human settlements statistics and on the study of national practices on sources, methods of collection, evaluation and use of current housing statistics.

2. Data compilation and dissemination

57. At its twenty-first session, the Statistical Commission endorsed the publication at five-year intervals of the Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics 21/ in place of the former Compendium of Housing Statistics. 22/

58. Using as a framework the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements held in 1976, a questionnaire for the collection of national

human settlements statistics was developed by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat and circulated to UNCHS, the regional commissions and the specialized agencies for comments and suggestions. The questionnaire was revised, taking into account all comments and suggestions. The data collection, compilation and printing took place during 1982-1984, and the first issue of the Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics was published in 1985. 18/

59. Also as a result of the review of outputs and resources consequent to the financial crisis, the second issue of the Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics was deleted from the work programme of 1990-1991. The Statistical Commission, at its twenty-fifth session, noted the deletion with concern and considered it untimely following the adoption by the General Assembly of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 (Assembly resolution 43/181). 23/ At its twelfth session, held from 24 April to 3 May 1989, the Commission on Human Settlements, in its resolution 12/6, expressed deep concern about the deletion of the Compendium and invited the Statistical Commission at its twenty-sixth session to examine ways and means of resuming the work on the Compendium within the 1990-1991 work programme. Subsequently, and in response to the concern expressed by the Commission on Human Settlements, the Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination, at its thirteenth session, added sub-item 9 (f), Human settlements statistics, to the agenda of the present session of the Statistical Commission (see E/CN.3/1991/2, para. 9 (b)).

60. Also in response to these concerns, the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat is endeavouring to resume work on the collection of human settlements statistics in co-operation with UNCHS, using existing resources. Under the present arrangement, data collected by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat will be provided in unpublished form to UNCHS and other users. If sufficient resources permit, the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat will consider the possibility of resumption of publication of human settlements statistics in the 1992-1993 biennium.

61. A computerized data base, the Human Settlements Statistics Data Base (HSDB-stat), is expected to be completed at the end of 1990 by UNCHS for distribution to users. It is designed to store, process and retrieve global statistical data on human settlements gathered from a wide range of sources. It has 45 tables of data covering information on population, geography, economy, infrastructure, services and housing, and a directory. In addition, UNCHS is preparing a statistical pocketbook entitled Basic Human Settlements Statistics, 17/ which is scheduled to be published in the third quarter of 1990. The pocketbook contains 50 statistical series on population and households, land, housing, infrastructure and services for 1960, 1970 and 1980.

3. Points for discussion

62. Points for discussion are set out in paragraph 72 (e).

F. Statistical programmes for social indicators

1. General

63. The present section covers work on special population groups. For a discussion of other work on social indicators, see the reports of the Secretary-General on progress made in the development of a co-ordinated data base for the United Nations system for selected social statistics and indicators of common interest and the development of related national data bases (E/CN.3/1991/20) and on the statistical work of international organizations (E/CN.3/1991/28).

64. The work programme on special populations, including the elderly, children, youth, the disabled, families, homeless persons, and refugees, has focused its methodological work on issues targeted by Governments and intergovernmental agencies for policy formulation and planning purposes. It also compiles and disseminates national statistics for selected population groups and continues to work for improving statistical compilation and dissemination in this area.

65. The methodological work focuses on the following areas: (a) harmonization of concepts and definitions of special populations; (b) adaptation of the World Health Organization (WHO), International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps, for the identification and description of special populations of disabled persons from data collected through the population censuses, sample surveys and registration systems; (c) development of data collection methods; (d) formulation of tabulation plans for the study of special populations for use in censuses, surveys and registration systems; and (e) design and testing of dissemination programmes for statistics on special populations to meet the information and research needs of Governments, non-governmental organizations and other users.

2. Data compilation

66. Several outputs on data compilation are being prepared in 1990 and subsequent years on, inter alia, disabled persons, population aging and elderly persons, and children. The Compendium of Disability Statistics 17/ is scheduled to be published in the third quarter of 1990. This exploratory work is being produced for the first time by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, reviewing national disability statistics from population censuses, national surveys and registration systems of 55 countries or areas. It is based on statistics stored in the International Disability Statistics Data Base (DISTAT, version 1), a microcomputer data base developed by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in 1988-1989 and disseminated to over 90 organizations world wide. A full discussion of DISTAT is given in United Nations Disability Statistics Data Base, 1975-1986: Technical Manual, which was published in 1988 (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Y/3). 24/

3. Methodological work

67. Preparation has begun on the National Guide to the Development of Disability Statistics, which will be issued in 1991. 17/ The purpose of this publication is to discuss the concepts, definitions and methodologies available for the study of disability through the use of censuses, surveys and registration systems. Further development of DISTAT is being planned and version 2 of this statistics data base is expected to be available in 1993.

68. Work on population aging and elderly persons will result in a special issue of the 1990 Demographic Yearbook to be published in 1992. The topic on aging will include some new data collected such as questions about living arrangements of elderly persons and also a full review of national census statistics of disability. A separate report on the situation of elderly women is planned to be issued in 1992.

69. Work on statistics on the situation of children, with an emphasis on pre-school, has begun in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and WHO. On the basis of extrabudgetary resources, a statistical chart on child development was produced jointly by UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and the United Nations in the third quarter of 1990.

4. Training programmes

70. Two interregional training programmes on disability statistics, both supported by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and carried out in collaboration with the Governments of Hungary and Malta, were implemented in 1988 and 1989 respectively. 25/ These two training programmes have broadened the international network of statistical producers and users who are responsible for the implementation of national census, survey and registration programmes. The significant interaction and active participation of the international community in the discussion of disability statistics development is rapidly leading to a need for international statistical standards and guidelines for census, survey and registry work in this area.

5. Points for discussion

71. Points for discussion are set out in paragraph 72 (f).

III. POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

72. The Statistical Commission may wish:

- (a) To comment on the overall scope and coverage of the methodological work undertaken by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat;
- (b) To provide guidance and make recommendations on the following points:
 - (i) The implementation and use of ISIC, Rev.3;
 - (ii) The need for further development of the provisional CPC;
 - (iii) Links between the work on economic classifications and other methodological work on national accounts and service statistics;
 - (iv) The need for special purpose classifications, e.g., for tourism, the information sector or environmental statistics;
 - (v) The planned activities outlined in paragraph 14 above;
- (c) To comment on progress made and future programmes in the areas of energy and international trade and transport statistics, including the ASYCUDA programme;
- (d) To review the progress made in the 1990 World Population and Housing Census Programme and consider further preparations needed in order to fully utilize and integrate the census results with other data sources, particularly post-censal demographic and social surveys;
- (e) To suggest ways and means to strengthen the work in the area of housing and human settlements statistics;
- (f) To comment on progress made and future programmes in the area of special population groups.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1987, Supplement No. 6 (E/1987/19), para. 216.

2/ Ibid., 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), para. 163.

3/ Ibid., paras. 95 (a) and (b).

4/ Ibid., para. 95 (d).

5/ Ibid., para. 84.

6/ Ibid., paras. 81, 83-86 and 88.

Notes (continued)

7/ See "Report of the Expert Group Meeting on SNA Co-ordination", (ESA/STAT/AC.34/25), paras. 1-11 and para. 1 of the note to the report.

8/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), para. 88.

9/ Conference of European Statisticians, "Report of the twenty-seventh plenary session", 12-16 June 1989 (ECE/CES/34).

10/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.XVII.7.

11/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 82.XVII.13.

12/ See "Report of the Expert Group on Classifications and Measurement in the Field of Energy Statistics" (ESA/STAT/AC.8/11).

13/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.XVII.4.

14/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1987, Supplement No. 6 (E/1987/19), para. 113.

15/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.88.XVII.13.

16/ This section of the report was provided by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

17/ To be issued as a United Nations publication.

18/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.84.XVII.5.

19/ See "Report of the Expert Group on Human Settlements Statistics" (ESA/STAT/AC.31/1).

20/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.XVII.23.

21/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1981, Supplement No. 2 (E/1981/12), para. 116.

22/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.80.XVII.4.

23/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 3 (E/1989/21), para. 212.

24/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.88.XVII.12.

Notes (continued)

25/ International Training Workshop on the Development of National Microcomputer Data Bases on Disability for Population Studies and Development Planning (Budapest, December 1988), conducted by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in collaboration with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the Hungarian Central Statistical Office; and International Training Workshop in Disability Statistics on Census and Survey Methods for the Study of Impairment, Disabilities and Handicaps (Malta, 27 November-6 December 1989), conducted by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in collaboration with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and co-hosted by the Government of Malta and the International Institute for Aging (INIA).
