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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

Plans of international organizations in the area of statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report provides updated information on future activities in statistics of the organizations of the United Nations system and of several international organizations outside the system. For most organizations, it covers the principal activities planned through 1991. The sections on the United Nations organizations generally incorporate revisions made in the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1991 and reflect approved work programmes and draft work programmes for 1990-1995 and 1992-1997. Only important planned changes are discussed - that is, new activities, activities to be cancelled and activities to be modified significantly.

* E/CN.3/1989/1.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present report provides the Commission with a summary of future activities in statistics of the organizations of the United Nations system and of several international organizations outside the system.
2. The sections on the United Nations organizations generally incorporate revisions made to the medium-term plans for the period 1984-1991, in some cases to proposed plans for the period 1990-1995, and in the case of the Statistical Office, DIESA, for the period 1992-1997. The report is necessarily selective in coverage, owing to the restrictions on its length. The sections on the activities of the Statistical Office should be read in conjunction with the notes by the Secretary-General entitled "Proposed work programme of the Statistical Office for 1990-1991 and related information" (E/CN.3/1989/CRP.1) and "Preliminary proposals for the medium-term plan of the Statistical Office for 1992-1997" (E/CN.3/1989/CRP.2).
3. The general orientation of the future work of each organization remains largely unchanged. Only new activities and activities that have been cancelled or modified significantly are discussed. Routine, continuing activities, such as the issuance of recurrent publications, and activities that have not changed since the twenty-fourth session of the Commission are not reported.
4. The work of the Statistical Office is described under two organizational headings.
5. In carrying out its responsibility for the provision of technical co-operation in statistics, the Statistical Office will continue to assist the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD) by providing substantive support to assist developing countries improve their statistics and statistical capabilities, including data processing activities pursued in close collaboration with the regional commissions and other international bilateral organizations. Efforts will also continue to assist Governments in developing permanent self-sustaining capabilities through the National Household Survey Capability Programme. In the field of statistical data processing and informatics, countries will be assisted in strengthening their general capabilities for processing statistical and related data through the use of new technologies and in developing capabilities for creating and maintaining specialized data bases, taking advantage of emerging low-cost technologies.
6. The Commission at its twenty-fourth session ^{1/} agreed that it would be useful to show details of the work planned by the international organizations according to subject-matter, which would help to identify gaps and overlaps. This was further discussed by the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities at its twenty-first session. ^{2/} It was agreed during the Sub-Committee's deliberations that the Statistical Office would prepare a coding system by function and broad subject-matter area to permit each organization to code its various planned activities. The code was circulated to all potential contributors to the document. However, on the basis of submissions received, it was not possible to

re-order them in a standard format. Coded responses were received from 14 agencies, and there was considerable variation in their nature and scope.

I. UNITED NATIONS

A. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs: Statistical Office

Subprogramme 1: Development of concepts and methods

7. For information on plans in national accounts and balances, see E/CN.3/1989/CRP.2, paragraphs 5-6.

8. Work on economic classifications will involve completion of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), revision 3 and Central Product Classification (CPC), for publication. It will also involve work on systematical and alphabetical indexes and other supplementary material for ISIC and CPC, and ongoing advice to countries in their implementation. Work continues on the indexes to the Standard International Trade Classification, revision 3.

9. For plans in price statistics, see E/CN.3/1987/24, paragraph 9.

10. Regarding the integration and improvement of social, demographic and human settlements statistics, specialized studies will be prepared on methods for the collection and dissemination of statistics in fields assigned high priority by Governments, including statistics on special population groups such as women, youth, the elderly, children and disabled persons and on the development and use of national data bases in the compilation of social indicators, and general data bases using data from population and housing censuses, household surveys and civil registration systems and other types of administrative reporting systems. Further technical documentation will be prepared on methods of compiling supplementary accounts to the System of National Accounts on women's contribution to economic activity in the formal and informal sectors, and use of time-budget surveys to measure women's and men's social and economic activities.

11. For plans related to the 1990 round of population and housing censuses, see E/CN.3/1989/15, paragraph 47. Course outline and training materials for a series of workshops on economic statistics in future population censuses and surveys will be prepared in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

12. The technical report series on environment statistics will focus on selected aspects of such statistics; it is intended that a first report on statistics of environmental aspects of energy production and use will be prepared. A handbook on environmental accounting will also be prepared in collaboration with the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

13. For plans in energy statistics methodology, see E/CN.3/1987/24, paragraph 13.

14. In industrial statistics, the effectiveness of the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics will be reviewed, with implications for the next World Programme of Industrial Statistics.

15. With regard to services statistics, the main emphasis will be put on:

(a) Developing the methodology of the quantity and price indices of services with a view to improving constant price estimates;

(b) Elaborating further the concepts, definitions, classifications and data collection methods in trade in services statistics;

(c) Developing the commodity and activity classifications in services;

(d) Elaborating comprehensive guidelines for the most important areas such as financial services, insurance and other business services.

Subprogramme 2: Application of advanced technology in the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics

16. For plans in this area see E/CN.3/1987/24, paragraph 17.

Subprogramme 3: National accounts, industry, international trade and transport statistics

17. Activity in the compilation of national accounts will gradually be reorganized: country data files, including all national accounts information and related statistics, will be established for a selected group of countries, which will be expanded annually. They will replace the present division of work in which compilation activities - covering all countries - concerning official national accounts data, estimates of national accounts information and other related statistics, are assigned to different staff members. The format of the country data files is based on a simplified national accounts compilation framework already developed at the Statistical Office.

18. The country file reorientation of the work will improve the integration of the estimation methods used by the Statistical Office with the present compilation of official national accounts data obtained through questionnaires, and will facilitate the integration of national accounts into related international data series on the governmental sector such as Government Finance Statistics (GFS), Balance of Payments and Input/Output Tables. The Statistical Office is at present aligning its estimation methodologies used in the field of national accounts with those of other offices in the United Nations Secretariat, particularly the Office for Development Research and Policy Analysis. As a result of those activities it will be possible to expand the present national accounts series to cover not only basic GDP information available for most countries but also institutional-sector data for a large number of countries.

19. Communication with individual countries about the use of the compilation framework for making estimates at the Statistical Office may induce countries to expand their national accounts compilation along the same lines and could also be used as a point of departure in the development of national accounts through technical assistance efforts.

20. In support of the above, the Statistical Office is introducing questionnaire diskettes to replace the present use of printed national accounts questionnaires. Since consistency checks are incorporated into the diskettes and since diskette data can be linked through software programmes to computerized data systems in various countries and the Statistical Office, the use of the diskettes should contribute to improved data submissions by countries and should also reduce the response burden on countries and the processing burden on the Statistical Office.

21. The industrial statistics programme will focus on streamlining its data processing procedures and expanding the content of the industrial data bases. For details, see E/CN.3/1989/15, paragraphs 7-16.

22. The collection and processing of international data on construction activity for publication in Construction Statistics Yearbook has been discontinued indefinitely, owing to resource constraints.

23. The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System of the Customs Co-operation Council and the correlated Standard International Trade Classification, revision 3, are now in force. Quarterly and annual international trade data based on either of those classifications are already being supplied by member countries.

Subprogramme 4: Energy and related statistics

24. For plans in energy and related statistics compilation, see E/CN.3/1987/24, paragraph 13.

Subprogramme 5: Price statistics and related areas

25. Preparatory arrangements on phase VI (with 1990 as reference year) of the International Comparison Programme (ICP) will be made. An ICP handbook including practical instructions for the participating countries will be prepared.

26. The United Nations microcomputer data bases on women's statistics and indicators, disability statistics and indicators and general socio-economic indicators will be updated for public dissemination, with accompanying technical documentation, and a general compilation of indicators of social trends in the United Nations Development Decades, 1950-1990, will be prepared. Special tabulations and series of social indicators, human settlements statistics, statistics and indicators on women and statistics and indicators on special population groups will continue to be prepared, to meet ad hoc requests, for example, from the Commission on the Status of Women or the Commission for Social Development.

27. For dissemination of statistics on diskettes, see E/CN.3/1989/3, paragraph 27. In particular, time series of population statistics on various topics presented in the Demographic Yearbook will be reformulated to disseminate to users with access to microcomputers. The topics include population data by age and sex, economically active population, fertility and mortality statistics.

Subprogramme 6: Social, demographic and environment statistics

28. National and international collection of environment statistics will be provided and implemented at the regional levels as part of a global programme of environment statistics.

Subprogramme 7: Co-ordination of international statistical programmes

29. For plans on co-ordination, see E/CN.3/1989/CRP.2, paragraph 6.

B. Department of Technical Co-operation for Development

Subprogramme: Support of technical co-operation in statistics

30. For plans in support of technical co-operation, see E/CN.3/1989/19, paragraphs 30-31. An increased number of projects is expected with special emphasis on the establishment and strengthening of household survey capabilities, population and housing censuses, economic and social statistics, statistical data processing, and the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries through training workshops and exchange of statistical experience.

31. Information on the orientation of technical co-operation in statistics can be found in the reports of the Secretary-General on technical co-operation activities in the fields of statistics rendered by the United Nations system, other international organizations and countries (E/CN.3/1989/16), and the National Household Survey Capability Programme (E/CN.3/1989/18).

C. Economic Commission for Europe

32. The statistics programme of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) during the period 1990-1995 will have the following objectives:

(a) To improve statistical standards and methodology in the ECE region as regards economic, social, demographic and environment statistics, in the light of the recommendations of the Statistical Commission, the specialized agencies and other bodies, as necessary;

(b) To promote close co-ordination of the statistical activities in Europe of the international organizations so as to achieve greater uniformity in concepts and definitions and to reduce to a minimum the burden on the national statistical offices;

(c) To provide statistical data for research studies and for general information purposes.

Subprogramme 1: Standards and methodology

33. Major focus will be on the development of internationally comparable data needed to facilitate decision-making by Governments on major policy issues. Special attention will continue to be given to statistics needed as a basis for forecasting and the preparation of economic and social perspectives, and to environment statistics. In addition, the following subjects will receive special emphasis during the period: national accounts and balances (particularly SNA/MPS links); international comparisons; energy statistics; transport statistics; statistics of services; population and housing censuses; statistics and indicators on the role and situation of women; and use of computers for statistical purposes. The subprogramme will result in methodological documents, guidelines or recommendations. At its annual plenary sessions, the Conference of European Statisticians will review the statistical work in the ECE region and consider questions concerning the co-ordination of statistical activities in the area of intergovernmental organizations, statistical support to ECE studies and projects, contributions to the work of the Statistical Commission and statistical problems of special interest to the ECE countries which are developing from the economic point of view. Substantive support will continue to be given to UNDP statistical projects in the region.

Subprogramme 2: Research data and projects

34. The activities under this subprogramme are of a continuing nature. Statistical bulletins will continue to be published in various areas of the work of ECE. Particular importance will be attached to the development of the ECE statistical data bank and to the use of new technologies for the dissemination of statistical information.

D. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

35. The secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has extended its current plan period to 1991 and hence the next medium-term plan would cover the four-year period 1992-1995, as decided by the General Assembly. Therefore the statistics programme for the current medium-term plan will be continued into the 1990-1991 period, with some minor modifications at programme element level. The only major departure during the extended period, compared with the current plan period, would be the inclusion of Government Sector Computerization as a new subprogramme of the Statistics Programme. That subprogramme envisages an action-oriented set of microcomputer-related activities

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for assisting developing countries to make optimum use of information technology in the governmental sector. A substantive UNDP-supported project entitled "Improved Government Information System" would be implemented under the subprogramme.

36. The plan and the work programme in statistics at ESCAP is largely designed to assist developing member countries meet increasing demands for statistical information at national and sub-national levels as well as for international uses. While continuing the work undertaken during the current plan period, the ESCAP Statistics Programme during 1990-1991 and 1992-1995 will be directed towards helping countries consolidate progress already made and tackling new issues which will inevitably arise in the future. Among the areas of work that will be continued are the strengthening of statistical capabilities through direct technical assistance such as advisory services, training and seminar/workshops and the gathering and sharing of comparable statistical information relating to the countries of Asia and the Pacific. The theme of human resources development will be integrated into the work programmes in conjunction with the work of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). The regional advisory services have proved very cost-effective; they will therefore be continued in areas such as national accounts, population censuses and surveys, household surveys, energy statistics, social statistics, government computerization, data processing and data-base development. The development of service statistics, which constitutes a large and growing share in the economies of the region, will also assume much greater importance in the 1990s.

37. The collection and compilation of socio-economic statistics relating to countries of the region will continue. Efforts will continue to further improve the coverage, quality and comparability of data thus collected and disseminated. While dissemination of statistical data through printed media will continue, efforts will also be made to introduce new dissemination services through, for example, diskettes for microcomputers, and other means. Work on an ESCAP-wide integrated data bank, including direct access to data bases at New York and Geneva and the sites of other international agencies will be promoted. With appropriate equipment and proper co-ordination of data bases within and outside the Secretariat, it is hoped that ESCAP should emerge by the end of 1995 as the region's socio-economic information centre for official statistics, with Governments and other users having electronic access.

E. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Subprogramme 1: Regional framework on statistical information

38. The general objectives pursued within this subprogramme are primarily:

(a) To provide a comprehensive, consistent and coherent regional framework of statistical information on the economic and social situation of Latin American and Caribbean countries needed to afford a measure of the overall performance of individual national and regional economies and adequate policy design;

(b) To collect, compile, evaluate and disseminate more comprehensive, timely, reliable and comparable statistics on national accounts, income distribution, external trade and foreign financing, prices, industry, natural resources, energy, agriculture, services, and on social and demographic matters;

(c) To provide those data in the most suitable technological framework so as to increase responsiveness to users' needs.

39. The activities to be undertaken within the subprogramme have been organized according to three programme elements: Latin American Data Bank on Economic and Social Statistics, regional statistics and indicators, statistical support to ECLAC studies and projects.

Subprogramme 2: Statistical development, statistical
analysis and regional co-operation

40. The performance under this heading is to comply with the following targets:

(a) Improve the statistical data production and processing capabilities of the region, incorporating concepts, methodologies and computer techniques that will avail higher standards in terms of data timeliness and reliability;

(b) Enhance an expeditious access to information retrieval to both public and private sectors within each country;

(c) Provide a wider range of users with quantitative methodological tools for data analysis;

(d) Promote and/or strengthen horizontal co-operation channels among the countries of the region and between them and those of other regions;

(e) Evaluate and transfer to the region statistical methodologies and technological progress in computing systems achieved in developed countries aimed at supporting the improvement of timeliness and cost-effectiveness of data collection and dissemination;

(f) Promote the development, updating and harmonization of international standard classifications, encouraging the region's adherence to and implementation of recommendations adopted by the Statistical Commission of the United Nations;

(g) Act, at the request of Governments, as executing or associate executing agency of regional and national projects in the statistical field;

(h) Collaborate with Governments in the establishment and practice of dynamic institutional mechanisms for statistical co-operation;

(i) Develop, implement and promote quantitative analysis methodologies on the basis of data stored in the Latin American and Caribbean Data Bank on Economic and Social Statistics, drawing special attention to the quality of data produced, including the provision of appropriate documentation.

41. For the attainment of those objectives, the subprogramme has been organized in six programme elements, as follows: social statistics; national accounts and economic development indicators; external trade statistics; technical co-operation; workshops, seminars and training courses; and regional statistical organizations and dissemination of information.

42. Among the above, special emphasis will be placed upon the following activities:

(a) Promoting the implementation in the region of the Third Revision of the SNA and of Revision 3 of SITC and ISIC;

(b) Supporting the national statistical offices in the introduction of software for the editing, tabulation and organization of data bases, including those related to the 1990 census round;

(c) Supporting national statistical offices in general statistical organization, household surveys, national accounts and the activities of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development.

F. Economic Commission for Africa

Subprogramme 1: Statistical development

43. For the next medium-term plan, technical assistance will be provided in the formulation of statistical plans, including training programmes and detailed data processing requirements, the establishment of user committees on optimal use of central data processing facilities and the development and maintenance of integrated computer-based systems of demographic, social and economic statistics. Guidelines will also be prepared on the acquisition of computer facilities, including microcomputers and their supporting software, the data applications and analysis of particular relevance to the region and the use of statistical information for monitoring the implementation of national development plans. Statistical computing materials for on-the-job training and formal training of statisticians at statistical training centres will also be provided.

Subprogramme 2: Economic statistics

44. The activities will concentrate on building up the self-reliance of national staff through a series of short missions to countries of the region. They will include on-the-job training as well as more formal training sessions. Statistical offices will be encouraged to see national accounts as a framework for improving the collection and use of basic economic statistics generally and not just an isolated exercise. A series of training workshops will be held in order to examine various aspects of the economic statistics programme and to develop further the professional confidence and competence of the participants. The workshops will focus on international trade statistics, business surveys, basic economic statistics and national accounts.

Subprogramme 3: Censuses and surveys

45. The activities will continue to focus on assistance to member States in the maintenance and strengthening of institutional frameworks for the provision of integrated demographic, social and economic data on household and household members as well as environment statistics. In particular, advisory services, including on-the-job training for national personnel, will be provided on request to Member States in the fields of population and housing censuses, civil registration, household surveys and environment statistics. Extrabudgetary resources will be used for those services.

46. A series of workshops and seminars will be conducted in order to promote exchange of experience between the countries of the region and to further increase the skills of the participants. The workshops and seminars will focus on the development of civil registration systems and vital statistics collection, population censuses, with particular reference to special groups, organizations, the content and methodology of household surveys and environment statistics.

47. A number of in-depth studies will also be undertaken in specific areas such as quality control in censuses and surveys, use of sampling, measurement of economic activity and development of environment statistics.

G. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Subprogramme 1 (1990-1991): Statistical development

48. The main activities during the period 1990-1991 will include:

(a) ESCWA statistical data bases will be expanded to cover major economic and social statistics;

(b) The Statistical Abstract for the region will continue to be published on a yearly basis;

(c) Co-operation in statistics with the League of Arab States, which will continue and be enhanced, especially in the field of joint statistical publications;

(d) The intergovernmental meeting of heads of central statistical organizations which will be held in 1991 to review the ESCWA statistical programme and to establish its main orientation.

Subprogramme 2 (1990-1991): National accounts and
economic statistics

49. The main activities will involve preparation of national series on national accounts, industry, international trade, price and finance statistics and the distribution to member States and other potential users of recurrent publications on each of those topics.

Subprogramme 3 (1990-1991): Social, demographic and
environmental statistics

50. Under this subprogramme, the compendium on social statistics will be published in 1991 in co-operation with Arab regional organizations. The main series for statistics and indicators on the situation of women in the region will be developed in co-ordination with the women's programme in ESCWA. An assessment of the situation of environment statistics in the region will be made with a view to preparing the main national series in that field.

Subprogramme 1 (1992-1995): Statistical information services

51. During the period 1992-1995 the statistical data base will serve ESCWA substantive divisions as well as member States and regional and national organizations concerned. Statistical networks could be established for transmission of information with the main United Nations areas and main regional organizations. Publications as well as data in machine-readable form will be made available to member States and other users.

Subprogramme 2 (1992-1995): Statistical development

52. The main activities will be:

(a) Organizing and participating in training programmes in co-ordination with regional institutes and other organizations concerned;

(b) Providing backstopping in statistics and data processing, especially for the least developed countries of the region;

(c) Developing standardized concepts and methods through technical meetings and training programmes and publication of technical manuals;

(d) Assisting member States in implementing United Nations recommendations and guidelines in various fields of statistics and in decennial world programmes in population and housing censuses and industrial censuses.

Subprogramme 3 (1992-1995): National accounts and
economic statistics

53. Recurrent publications on national accounts, industry, energy, foreign trade, price and finance statistics will be improved with the use of computerized ESCWA data bases. Price indices will be developed and, when necessary, estimated for the purpose of deflation of the national accounts aggregates for some ESCWA member States. The international economic classifications will be disseminated and assistance rendered to some ESCWA countries to introduce and adapt the classifications into their current statistical systems.

Subprogramme 4: Social, demographic and environment statistics

54. The compendium of social and environment statistics will be continued and expanded. Assistance will be rendered to some countries of the region to carry out their national censuses and socio-demographic surveys. An assessment of the implementation of the 1990 round of population and housing censuses will be made. Migration and labour statistics will be developed through specific activities such as holding technical meetings and preparing manuals for the region. Social and environment statistics would be developed in the region, taking into account Statistical Commission recommendations, guidelines prepared by the Statistical Office and progress made in the field by international and regional organizations concerned.

H. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

55. The programme of work in statistics in UNCTAD calls for continued emphasis on the collection and maintenance of data provided by the Statistical Office and specialized agencies in the fields, inter alia, of trade, national accounts, prices, finance and balance of payments.

56. UNCTAD will continue to work in close collaboration with the Statistical Office and international agencies in refining and updating statistical methodologies and harmonizing economic classifications with a view to improving coverage, timeliness and level of details of trade reported by developing countries via the ASYCUDA project. For the purpose of the General System of Preferences (GSTP), foreign trade data from developing countries are needed at a detailed level, preferably at the tariff-line level or in terms of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System.

57. Further work is under way to link the comprehensive Economic Time Series (ETS) to the data bases of other international agencies to facilitate access and exchange of data.

58. UNCTAD is actively seeking to enlarge the number of developing countries that report private and public financial flows to other developing countries and agencies.

59. UNCTAD will continue its efforts to improve the trade deflator system, in particular with regard to manufactures originating in developing countries.

60. The Commodity Price Bulletin, which is at present limited to primary commodities, will be enlarged to include energy prices and manufactured goods prices.

I. United Nations Children's Fund

61. No text was provided.

II. SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY
AND GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

A. International Labour Organisation

62. The need to broaden the statistical coverage of different types of employment is particularly obvious in developing countries where the wide range of informal-sector activities performed by people in various types of irregular employment is inadequately documented. This calls for more refined labour statistics, identifying more precisely the level, nature, characteristics and consequences of the non-standard forms of employment.

63. Wage statistics are limited currently to paid employment; income generated by different forms of employment, including self-employment, is not adequately identified. Work will be undertaken to guide the collection of data on income from self-employment and precarious employment, and on the effect of taxes and social security contributions and benefits relating to net income employment. Such new data will enable better analyses of income distribution, the standard of living and the extent of poverty and employment income relationships. Moreover, information on income from self-employment is essential for integrating employment and income statistics.

64. At present, data-gathering on occupational injuries, as defined by the recommendation adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), is generally limited to workers protected by national legislation and excludes all those in forms of employment not covered by the legislation who may be working in poor or even dangerous conditions. It is envisaged to revise the earlier recommendation so as to identify, if possible, the most dangerous work hazards outside the formal sector; that work will be carried out in conjunction with related activities in the field of occupational safety and health concerning a possible new international labour standard on the reporting of industrial accidents.

65. It is also desirable to develop standards for integrated data collection of labour statistics. Therefore there will be an examination of the problem of achieving complementarity between censuses and surveys and the reporting system used, with exact linking and statistical matching.

65. Data on employment, wages and hours of work are published in the ILO Yearbook on Labour Statistics and Bulletin of Labour Statistics, but the figures do not show the relationships between them. Ideally, data on average hours worked should be disaggregated to indicate averages for part-time employment and other atypical types of employment, and to reveal differences between industrial and service sectors. The same comment applies to wage statistics. The coverage of Statistical Sources and Methods will be extended to include labour cost, occupational injuries and strikes.

66. Future growth in employment will probably take place to a large extent in the service sector, both in industrialized and in developing countries. However, the available statistics are much better for the manufacturing sector. Work is under way to redress the imbalance, the revision of the International Standard

Classification of Occupations (ISCO) constituting the main contribution of the ILO to that effort so far. After the adoption of ISCO by the 14th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (November 1987), a revised version will be published as well as a manual on the methodology.

67. The Bureau of Statistics will set up a documentation centre on national occupational classifications and practices in order to update continuously ISCO-88 occupational titles and descriptions and maintain ILO information in the field of occupational classifications. That expertise will enable the ILO to help member countries with advice on the classifications, which are used in many domains including censuses, employment services, the planning of vocational training and education programmes, worker planning, occupational health analysis, wage analysis etc.

68. ILO publications - the Yearbook, Bulletin of Labour Statistics with the annual supplementary issue of ILO October Inquiry, and the Statistics Sources and Methods series - will continue to be improved. Moreover, a complete restructuring of the Yearbook is envisaged so that statistical series can be arranged by their sources, which will facilitate the joint analysis of a number of interrelated statistics on labour; ensure that the data for different subjects are consistent and coherent with respect to source, period of reference, coverage etc.; and enable the ILO, for the first time, to make its data available to the public, either on-line or on computer tapes and diskettes in addition to their traditional dissemination in print. That will necessarily involve a restructuring of the LABORSTA data base, which will be turned into a statistical time series data base.

69. Work on household income and expenditure surveys will lead to the issue of two publications: a compendium of national practices on the methodology of household income and expenditure surveys, and a publication containing comparative basic statistics on the structure, composition and distribution of household income and expenditure.

70. It is hoped that the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians will be held in 1992 and that resolutions on statistics on the informal sector and on non-standard forms of employment will be adopted and that the interim resolution on statistics of strikes will be revised.

B. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

71. Efforts will continue to be made to maintain, update and improve the quality and timeliness of world-wide and long-term statistical data series on production, trade and the utilization of crops, livestock and livestock products, the agricultural population and labour force, including their properties, land use, machinery, fertilizers, pesticides, index numbers on production and trade, food supplies, prices and economic accounts.

72. Continued efforts will be made to assist developing countries to improve their statistical infrastructure and data collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating activities, by providing additional and appropriate technical

publications on cost-effective statistical methods, organizing and conducting more training courses, workshops and seminars, and increasing efficiency in formulating, monitoring and evaluating field projects.

73. Emphasis will be given to the full development of the FAO World Agricultural Information Centre which will provide statistics of acceptable quality to users inside and outside FAO. That work will take into consideration developments in modern dissemination technology, comprehensive identification of users' data needs and in-depth appraisal of the quality and timeliness of the statistical information to be stored and retrieved by users.

74. The promotion to encourage developing countries to carry out their census of agriculture within the framework of the FAO Programme for the 1990 World Census of Agriculture will be intensified. Improved frames for agricultural censuses and surveys and use of network of microcomputers will be considered to improve data quality and timeliness.

75. With improvement in the financial situation, the following activities will be continued: trade matrices, animal feed balances, statistics on marketing costs and margins, development of a personal computer-based data processing system, application of remote sensing for country-wide land-use data, publication of long-term series on per capita crop and livestock production and of the FAO Statistical Pocketbooks, long-term series of per capita food supplies, average food balance sheets, manuals on livestock statistics, sampling techniques, land-use statistics, price index numbers and agricultural census methodology. Environment statistics related to agriculture will be a new programme element.

76. Efforts to improve the collection, reliability and dissemination of statistical data in the areas of fisheries and forestry, agrarian reform and rural development, food consumption and nutrition and prices will be continued.

77. FAO will continue to co-operate with the Household Survey Capability Programme on the collection of food and agricultural data through household surveys and with the World Bank on alternative survey approaches for obtaining timely and reliable estimates of food production, especially in countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

C. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

78. Efforts will continue to be made to improve the ongoing programme of collection and dissemination of statistical data, both in terms of increasing the coverage and improving the quality. Efforts will also be made to orient the programme towards subjects and aspects not currently covered but which reflect changes that have taken place recently in member States. Analytic studies reflecting recent developments in member States will also be carried out.

79. Methodological work intended to improve the relevance and reliability of the data collected will be undertaken, as will the definition of usable and functional indicators in the statistical fields of competence of the organization. Methodological work will also be conducted on sampling techniques for special surveys in areas where regular data collection is not done.

80. In the area of standardization, the revision of certain of the international standards already in existence and a study of international comparability of data in the fields of competence of the organization will be undertaken.

81. Activities designed to reinforce statistical infrastructures in member States and direct support to national statistical services in the form of expert and/or consultant missions, training courses and seminars, assistance in identifying areas in which special surveys should be conducted, and training at headquarters of national trainees are foreseen. The improved use of automatic data processing in the statistical areas of concern to UNESCO and the development of microcomputer-based software in these areas are also important aspects of the programme.

D. International Civil Aviation Organization

82. Greater efficiency, rather than expansion and diversification, remains the principal goal of the organization. Special emphasis will be placed on the application of advanced technology to the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics, including the development of a data bank with world-wide accessibility. Estimates of airline traffic will be provided quarterly, and eventually monthly estimates on a world-wide and regional basis will be made.

83. With regard to assistance to member States, efforts to promote the regular collection, analysis and publication of civil aviation statistics at the national level will be intensified through a programme of training courses, visits to States, informal workshops and guidelines.

E. World Health Organization

84. The concepts of information-directed planning and management and informed decision-making will be promoted. Support will be provided to national health authorities in formulating appropriate information strategies, identifying the required statistical data and building up structures and mechanisms for the collection, co-ordination, analysis and use of data. Guidelines and orientational material will be prepared and updated on the basis of the experience gained in technical co-operation with various countries.

85. The programme will promote appropriate training in epidemiology, statistics, information management and informed decision-making. The main focus will be on the training of central and senior governmental health service personnel, middle-level health service managers, and primary health workers. In collaboration with governments, materials and curricula on such subjects as health and nutrition household surveys will be developed for the training required at each level. Close co-ordination and co-operation will be maintained with the Statistical Office, UNICEF and other relevant organizations.

86. The activities in the areas of methodology and standard tools will stress practical methodologies and operational techniques for measuring health status, health-related behaviour and utilization of health services. Appropriate use of computers, especially microcomputers and hand-held computers, will be promoted. Indicators for manuals and guidelines on those topics will be produced. The preparation of the tenth revision of the International Classification of Diseases will be completed and the text submitted to the World Health Assembly in 1990 for approval. It will be published for use by countries as from 1993.

87. The WHO secretariat's capacity will be further strengthened for monitoring and evaluating progress towards the global goal for health for all; analysing international trends in mortality, disability and mortality from communicable and non-communicable diseases, in environment hazards, in health indicators, in health-related life-style etc.; and disseminating information for use by countries. The main publications - Weekly Epidemiological Record, World Health Statistics Quarterly and World Health Statistics Annual - will be maintained and kept under constant review so as to improve their contents to respond to the needs of readers.

88. The programme will provide, upon request, epidemiological and health statistical support, including technical advice on the use of appropriate techniques for health surveys and other studies, data analysis, the management of health information and the use of computers.

F. World Bank

89. The Bank will continue to be concerned with acquiring and using a broad range of economic statistics covering national accounts, balance of payments, external trade, and production. The focus will be on improving consistency between those statistics and ensuring that the various series are reconciled to the extent possible. The priorities will be to improve the timeliness and reliability of the data that are available to the Bank through interaction with member Governments.

90. It is envisaged that the programme of integrated household surveys under the Living Standards Measurement Study programme and the Social Dimensions of Adjustments project (covering sub-Saharan Africa) will yield a vastly expanded set of social statistics. They will make possible the development of new indicators to monitor poverty, the role of women in development, access to social amenities etc. and be a critical ingredient in the design of policies and programmes designed to aid disadvantaged population and social groups.

91. The Bank's Debtor Reporting System will be supplemented by information on the full range of external capital flows. The data collected through the Debtor Reporting System will be supplemented by data from other agencies, including the Organisation of Economic Co-operation for Development and regional banks. The Bank will mount additional efforts where appropriate. The strengthening of national capabilities in recording, compiling, and reporting external-debt data will receive high priority. To that end, member countries will be assisted through training of national officials, advice delivered through technical co-operation and

dissemination of guidelines and manuals, including appropriate information on computer technology.

92. Two major efforts are likely to be mounted in collaboration with other agencies to improve and upgrade the availability of environment data and its analysis. The preparation of a set of guidelines and recommendations for the preparation of resource and environment accounts will proceed. In that undertaking, the Bank will work closely with all other international agencies that have active programmes or are interested. Concurrently, the Bank expects to engage in assisting countries in data collection efforts to develop a range of environmental statistics needed for the preparation of country environmental profiles.

93. The improvement of intercountry comparability of GNP estimates will continue. Appropriate methods for conversion of national currency estimates of GNP into a common numeraire will be refined. That will include a modest programme of work on methodological issues relevant to the International Price Comparison Programme.

94. In the area of data processing and compilation, the focus will be on improving the internal capacity of the Bank to benefit from advances in computer technology. Improved access to Bank-wide data bases, in a user-friendly manner, will be developed, and the Bank's operational staff and such computing tools as are needed in supporting analytical work and econometric modelling. Externally, the Bank will develop appropriate networking arrangements with other international agencies for purposes of accessing their data bases, and also for providing access to the Bank's own data bases.

G. International Monetary Fund

95. Technical co-operation in statistics will continue as a major activity of the work of the Bureau of Statistics of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is expected that more than 20 per cent of the professional staff resources of the Fund's Bureau will be devoted to that activity, which will centre mostly on improving the statistical collection capabilities and methodological practices of developing countries. Priorities in technical co-operation will be centred on countries in which the statistical base is weak or where the data collection and reporting processes in the main fields of economic statistics are in need of review. Particular attention will be given to countries that have approached the IMF with requests for the use of its financial resources.

96. In the area of data communications with member countries, the IMF will seek out opportunities provided by advances in technology to improve data reporting to the Fund via electronic data links. Efforts are under way to establish appropriate data interchange standards. Attention will be given to co-ordinating demands for data from member countries, both at the institutional level and in conjunction with other organizations.

97. The statistical programme of the IMF will continue to give emphasis to the successful conclusion of the revision of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). In close collaboration with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the IMF will participate actively in the final round of expert group meetings and the subsequent review meetings, and will aim to contribute as appropriate to the draft document to be presented to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-sixth session in 1991.

98. In association with work on the System of National Accounts, the period 1990-1995 is also expected to be an active time for the IMF in reviewing the statistical methodologies in those fields coming within its purview. That includes especially a review of the fourth edition of Balance of Payments Manual, issued in 1977, and of the "Guide to money and banking statistics" issued in 1984 in International Financial Statistics.

99. On the basis of the present framework of data dissemination maintained by the IMF, including the use of electronic tape, the programme period 1990-1995 is expected to include the development of facilities that will capitalize on the increased availability of microcomputers in both developed and developing countries. Planning efforts in that area include the development of the compact disk as a new medium of data dissemination.

H. Universal Postal Union

100. The statistical activities of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) have two purposes:

(a) At the international level, to identify the general directions and means of postal traffic, and the relationship between the development of postal services and the economic and socio-cultural context;

(b) At the national level, to encourage the use of postal statistics by Governments so that they can better manage and plan their services.

101. At the Union headquarters, statistical work is based on data received from Governments in response to an annual questionnaire. After intensive and reliable verification and computation, the data are published in the Postal Services Statistical Yearbook.

102. Once the data are stored in the computer, the International Bureau supplies them, upon request, to users, member States, institutions and other sections of the Bureau, particularly those concerned with technical assistance.'

103. The International Bureau also makes estimates for missing data in the time series which are used for analyses that make possible the preparation of a triennial or quinquennial report on the postal services situation. The 1982-1984 report is being printed. The 1982-1986 report, intended for information for the participants to the next UPU Congress in Washington, D.C., in 1989, is being prepared.

104. A certain number of activities in the field of statistics, such as expert missions, are carried out at the request of member States.

105. Some officials from member States receive fellowships for on-the-job training at the more advanced administrative offices. The knowledge gained by those officials promotes improved collection of information. The training activities are organized directly by the sections concerned with technical assistance.

I. International Telecommunication Union

106. The ongoing activities of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with regard to telecommunication statistics will be oriented towards:

(a) Improving the accuracy, utility and timeliness of the collection, processing and dissemination of reliable statistical information concerning global telecommunication;

(b) Analysing the information collected in new and innovative ways, in order to show the trends of telecommunication development in the world;

(c) Continuing the publication of the Yearbook of Telecommunication Statistics, with fuller statistics relating to network growth, services and applications, operations and providers, and economics;

(d) Introducing new telecommunication technologies and new statistics information systems;

(e) Establishing a unit within ITU for co-ordination of telecommunication statistics.

J. World Intellectual Property Organization

107. In 1988 the organization issued a technical publication entitled WIPO: Industrial Property Statistics, 1985, which incorporated the improvements and changes outlined in document E/CN.3/1987/22, reviewed at the previous session of the Statistical Commission.

K. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

108. The programme of work in statistics of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) during the period 1990-1995 calls for increased emphasis on the collection of detailed statistics which will be used in the organization's technical co-operation activities and for research designed to support those activities, which are carried out in close collaboration with the Statistical Office. Furthermore, the ongoing statistical activities of UNIDO will be oriented towards:

(a) Statistical analysis of national and international data for the purpose of extending the detail and coverage of such data and ensuring a greater degree of international comparability;

(b) Dissemination of results through recurrent publications, such as the Handbook of Industrial Statistics and ad hoc empirical studies, and external distribution of industrial statistics in machine-readable form;

(c) Provision of technical assistance, on request, to assist developing countries in areas of data processing, storage and retrieval in connection with industrial censuses, surveys, data analysis and related activities.

L. International Atomic Energy Agency

109. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) collects, processes and distributes statistics, whenever necessary, for the execution of its programmes. As part of its research and isotopes programme, IAEA maintains for distribution to member States statistics on nuclear physics and the use of research reactors. As part of its nuclear energy programme, statistics are maintained on nuclear power-plant operations and energy economics. As part of its nuclear safety programme, statistics are maintained on incidents at nuclear power stations. No new areas of statistical collection are planned. The emphasis in the immediate future will be on providing more comprehensive statistics in a more flexible manner (in some cases machine-readable) to member States.

M. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

110. In view of its operational nature, the secretariat of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) does not establish medium-term plans. The indications below, therefore, cover the main features of the statistical documentation likely to be required by the contracting parties in dealing with commercial policy matters, either under consideration or foreseeable, or those which gave rise to documentation problems in the past and necessitate future action.

111. Emphasis will be on the improvement of the timeliness, comparability and internal consistency of the various production, trade, consumption and price statistics collected under the arrangements or agreements concluded under the auspices of GATT (textiles, dairy, bovine meat, civil aircraft, government procurements) and of the data required for customs tariff assessments and general economic research projects.

112. Continued support will be given, in collaboration with other international organizations, to studies in methodology regarding international trade statistics and related subjects.

III. OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

113. Major directions of work of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) Standing Commission on statistics for the period 1990-1995 are:

- (a) Improvement of the methodology of the System of Balances of the National Economy;
- (b) Continuation of the international comparisons of the net material product and related aggregates of the CMEA countries in real terms;
- (c) Elaboration of external trade statistics methodology;
- (d) Expanding the collection of data on external trade with the emphasis on the flows at constant prices;
- (e) Elaboration of the methodology of social statistics;
- (f) Expanding the collection of data on various aspects of social conditions of life;
- (g) Elaboration of the methodology of environmental statistics;
- (h) Expanding the collection of data on environment and its protection;
- (i) Statistical observation of the implementation of the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the member Countries of the CMEA up to the year 2000;
- (j) Statistical observation of international specialization and co-operation in the field of production;
- (k) Continuing the publishing of the CMEA Statistical Yearbook and other publications;
- (l) Continuation of the computerization of the processing of various bodies of the social economic information collected by CMEA secretariat.

B. Statistical Office of the European Communities

114. In keeping with its policy to broaden the geographical scope of technical co-operation, assistance was provided to third-party countries in the fields of statistics related to food policy, social indicators, foreign trade, national

accounts, prices and industrial statistics. The table below gives the expenditure in European currency units for statistical training for the period indicated:

<u>Region</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>
ECA	1 036	1 300	3 000
ECLAC	--	620	2 202
ESCAP	--	300	300
Other	--	200	200
	1 036	2 420	5 702

115. Funds came from two sources: funds administered directly by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (SOEC) and funds assigned to technical co-operation in statistics administered by other offices of the European Communities with technical support provided by SOEC.

IV. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Inter-American Statistical Institute

116. According to the new organization of the Institute, its activities for the period 1990-1995 will be oriented towards:

(a) Complementing the work carried out by other organizations concerning the development of governmental statistics in the American region;

(b) Promoting the development of academic and professional statistical activities, through scientific publications and technical meetings.

117. Regarding governmental statistics, the Institute will co-operate with the national statistical offices of the American region, particularly in their activities related to those of the Inter-American Statistical Conference. At the same time, co-operation with ECLAC, FAO, and other organizations of the United Nations family will continue in the fields of censuses, household surveys, and agricultural statistics.

118. A seminar every year or every second year, depending upon the availability of additional sponsorship, will be organized within the framework of the series of seminars on statistical methods initiated in 1987. The proceedings of the seminars will constitute an important part of the programme of scientific publications.

V. POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

119. The Commission may wish to comment on the plans of the organizations dealt with above in the area of statistics, taking into account, inter alia, the implications of ongoing national statistical work for the future plans of those organizations.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1987, Supplement No. 6 (E/CN.3/1987/19), para. 217.

2/ See ACC/1987/PG/11, para. 67.
