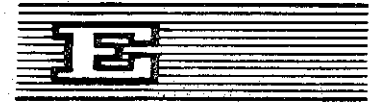




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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

**Second Session of the Conference  
of the African Demographers**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 6-10 May 1974

**MATTERS ARISING FROM ECA MEETINGS**

Introduction

1. This document reviews matters of relevance arising from different ECA meetings, including the second meeting of the Conference of Ministers.

I. Second Meeting of the Conference of Ministers

2. The eleventh session of the ECA, which was also the second meeting of the Conference of Ministers, was held in Accra from 19 to 23 February 1973. Full details of the meeting, including discussions, resolutions, work programme, etc., are given in the ECA Annual Report to the Economic and Social Council for the period of 14 February 1972 to 23 February 1973 (E/CN.14/591). The report on the activities of the secretariat of the ECA to the Commission included the report on the activities in the field of population (E/CN.14/CAD.2/7).

3. The Commission approved the work programme of the secretariat as recommended by the Technical Committee of Experts. That on population is given separately in the document E/CN.14/CAD.2/7.

II. Meetings of the Executive Committee

4. During the period under review, the 7th and 8th meetings of the Executive Committee were held on 3-6 April 1972 and 13-17 November 1972 respectively. Among others, the 7th meeting reviewed the activities of the Commission and relations with other international organizations. Relating to the last item the representatives of the ILO, FAO, WHO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and the OAU indicated their interest in collaborating and coordinating in the implementation of their programmes with the ECA and welcomed joint programmes.

5. At its 8th session the Committee took note of the report of the third meeting of the Technical Committee of Experts held on 2-8 September 1972 and decided that the report, together with the work programme adopted by the Technical Committee, be submitted to the second session of the Conference of Ministers (19-23 February 1973) subject to any recommendations and regulations which the Executive Committee might make.

III. Meetings of the Technical Committee of Experts

6. During the period under review the Technical Committee held its 3rd and 4th meetings on 2-8 September 1972 and 27-31 August 1973 respectively.
7. The tenth meeting of the Executive Committee, held from 12 to 16 November 1973 considered among others items, the activities of the Commission.
8. The most recent technical review of the activities of the Secretariat was made by the Technical Committee of Experts at its fourth meeting held from 27 to 31 August 1973. The Secretariat's activities reported to the Committee the work programme on population now placed before this Conference (E/CN.14/CAD.2/7).
9. The Committee referred in particular to the country case studies on interrelations of population growth and economic and social development undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations specialized and operating agencies. The relevant extracts from the report of the meeting are given below:

"219. On the studies, the Committee noted with satisfaction that the country case studies on interrelations of population growth and economic and social development, called for by the Conference of Ministers by resolution 230(X), was being continued as well as studies on the interrelations of family size and family health and welfare. In this connexion, the Committee re-emphasized the importance of these studies relating to specific country situations which would have immediate relevance to the member States. The Committee welcomed in particular the proposal to have a Consultative Group Meeting on the case studies in 1974. It was also appreciated that some of the case studies would have to be up-dated, based on the data and analysis to be provided by the population censuses being undertaken by a number of African countries, and the programme of integrated demographic, social and economic statistics and analysis, which was being formulated by the ECA and United Nations Headquarters.

"220. In the discussion on the case studies, the Committee noted that while these studies were expected to provide guidance to the African countries in initiating action programmes such as maternal and child health services and food and nutrition, by the specialized agencies such as WHO, UNICEF and FAO, this would also require inputs by the countries. The Committee recommended that ECA continue to cooperate with the United Nations agencies in such action programmes and noted with satisfaction that collaborative arrangements had already been established or were being worked out with the WHO in its studies on infant and early childhood mortality and with the FAO in its planning for better family living.

"221. In this connexion, the Committee noted that the second Regional Inter-agency Co-ordination Meeting on Population (1972) had been informed of the intensive research being undertaken jointly by the UNICEF and WHO in collaboration with FAO and IBRD to study the production of high-protein, economic, and assimilable weaning baby food based on local food and that some success had already been reported (Report E/CN.14/563, paragraph 78).

"222. The Committee also discussed the long-term and short-term aspects of population including the related questions of productivity improvement of health and acquisition of education and skills. Noting that these relevant topics were dealt with by the concerned United Nations agencies and other ECA divisions, the Committee recommended that to stress the multidisciplinary nature of population programmes, the population projects that are related to specific projects of other ECA divisions be identified in the submission of future work programmes.

"223. The Committee was also informed of the interest of the UNICEF in population and related projects and its support to the ECA's programme on population. In this connexion, the Committee noted the increasing interest of African Governments in their population situation, the two most recent instances being the support of family planning programmes as part of economic and social development by the President of Liberia and the statement by the President of Zaire on the number of births wanted by mothers. It was also suggested that a number of factors such as productivity in agriculture and land tenure systems, coupled with natural disasters such as drought and unregulated population growth, could, and in some cases did in fact, alter the delicate balance between food and population. In this connexion, the Committee noted that according to the estimates of the FAO, Africa had the highest proportion of population dependent on agriculture, which was growing at a higher rate than the population economically active in agriculture, thus increasing the burden on the latter and that it was the only major region where no decrease in the rate of growth of the population dependent on agriculture was anticipated during 1970-1985; the demand for agricultural commodities was also expected to grow at a higher rate than the production during 1975-1985.

"225. The Committee, however, noted with regret that a number of studies scheduled for the year (1973/1974) could not either be started or completed, partly because of recruitment difficulties, but mainly because the strengthening of the UNFPA financed staff, urged by the Committee at both its second and third meetings, upon which the approved programme has been prepared, had not been provided by Headquarters.

"226. The Committee recommended that the following be considered as 'Priority B' projects, which could be postponed if the additional staff resources were not obtained for 1973 and 1974:

- Study of mortality differentials in economic, social and cultural and ethnic groups in urban and rural areas, planned for 1973/74;
- Study of the problems of refugee population in selected countries and their social and demographic consequences, planned for 1973/74;
- Study of mortality patterns in nomadic and sedentary populations;
- Publication of African Population Journal;
- Study of marriage patterns and their relations to fertility

"227. The Committee recommended that the following projects be undertaken by UNESCO and, therefore, be taken off the list of projects but that ECA should continue to collaborate with UNESCO and that the two bodies also seek the cooperation of other relevant United Nations agencies in the formulation and implementation of these projects:

- Study of the effects of education on the volume of migration and economic activity;
- Working group on communication aspects of family planning programmes; UNFPA had already approved funds for a similar UNESCO seminar, "Family Planning Communication Seminar", being organized by its regional office in Dakar;
- Comparative studies of communication techniques used by African countries in their population programmes;

This was acceptable to the UNESCO representative.

"228. Noting that it had already been agreed that the Working Group on Demographic Aspects and Manpower and Employment (1975) would be jointly sponsored with ILO, the Committee recommended that the Working Group on Demographic Aspects of Educational Planning (1976) be jointly sponsored with UNESCO.

"229. The Committee also recommended that the ECA cooperate with UNESCO in its Consultation on Research and Evaluation of Communication in Family Planning (1974)"

10. The above recommendations by the Technical Committee have already been included in the revised work programme on population for the period 1974-1976 with projections up to 1979.

11. The Committee also welcomed the African programme of integrated demographic, social and economic status and analysis, which is to be reported to the Conference separately.

12. The Committee took note of the recommendations of the Seminar on Statistics and Studies of Migration and Urbanization concerning studies, including definitions of the urban population, and policies on internal migration and urbanization in African countries. It noted the recommendations made by the Working Group on Fertility, concerning the improvement of census and survey methods, study of fertility, fertility regulation, family life education and interrelations of population and development, and the draft resolution for action by the Commission. The Committee also noted the recommendations of the Seminar on Techniques of Evaluation of Basic Demographic Data on the importance of evaluation, including post-enumeration surveys, of population censuses and sample surveys and the evaluation of data of the African countries as well as the publication of the report of that Seminar and a number of selected papers in the African Population Studies series.

13. In the area of co-ordination, the Committee noted with satisfaction the continuing activities, in pursuance of ECA resolution 187 (IX), in the field of population by the two co-ordinating bodies - the Regional Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Meeting on Population and the Meeting of the Non-United Nations Organizations Interested in Population Programmes in Africa. The annual meetings and the frequent consultations have resulted in the identification of projects of common interest and joint projects.
14. On training, the Committee noted with satisfaction that the Regional Institute for Population Studies in Accra and the Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques in Yaoundé had become fully operational with facilities for demographic training and research now available for African countries with English and French as the respective media of instruction and research.
15. The Committee noted that demographic advisory services were continuing to be provided to the African countries in demographic analysis, projections and training, including a study of the rural exodus in the Central African Republic as part of an UNDAT project.
16. The Committee considered the draft resolution for action by the Commission which was unanimously adopted by the Working Group on Fertility Levels and Differentials in Africa and Prospects for the Future in December 1972. Noting the various General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions as well as the recommendation by the first session of the Conference of African Demographers and the discussion by the Committee itself at its second and third meetings (E/CN.13/512/Rev.1, paragraph 214 and E/CN.14/571, paragraph 167), the Committee endorsed in general operative paragraphs 5 and 7 (dealing respectively with the priorities in demographic statistics and analysis and population programmes) of the draft resolution and recommended that the resolution be considered also by the second session of the Conference of African Demographers in May 1974, and reported to the fifth meeting of the Committee; the draft resolution could then be finally presented to the third Conference of Ministers in 1975. The draft resolution is enclosed for consideration by the Conference.
17. Concerning the strengthening of staff resources of the Population Programme Centre, urged by the Committee at its second and third meetings (reports, (E/CN.14/512/Rev.1, paragraph 215, and E/CN.14/571, paragraph 168), the Committee noted that this was already under discussion with United Nations Headquarters and recommended that efforts be made to ensure that the required staff resources could be obtained from UNFPA in order to implement the work programme in full and also help to achieve a balance in the different aspects of population programmes within the United Nations system in Africa.
18. The Conference might wish to note that with effect from 1 January 1974, two additional regional advisory posts (including one on population programme and policies) and a secretariat post for the country case-studies on inter-relations of population growth and economic and social development have been approved by the UNFPA. Efforts are continuing in filling these posts in accordance with the rules of the UN and the recommendations of the Legislative Bodies of the ECA.

#### IV. First Session of the Conference of African Demographers

19. The first session of the Conference of African Demographers was held in Accra, Ghana, from 20 to 22 December 1971. Among the recommendations are the following:
20. Continuation of the ECA case studies on population levels and trends and their inter-relations with economic and social development and specific country situations. These case studies are continuing and will be reported on separately.
21. Completion of draft of the demographic manual containing concepts and definitions suitable for use in African countries, as called for by ECA resolution 230(X). The work on the manual will also be reported separately.
22. Maternal and child health services to include family planning services for those who desire these and family planning programmes are in operation, maternal and child health services to form a part of such a family planning programmes. This recommendation has been brought to the attention of the Technical Committee of Experts and other meetings of the ECA.
23. Adequate attention, through studies and investigation, be given to the problems of sub-fecundity and sterility prevailing in some parts of Africa and the required assistance to be provided at the request of the Governments concerned. The ECA secretariat has already assisted the University of Ibadan in formulating a project on the topic and participated in a technical meeting relating to it. The UNFPA has also given assistance to the Government of Cameroon for the study of the same problem.
24. A rapid expansion of the African Population Programme to enable it to reach a level comparable to those in the other regions in order to provide the African countries with services in those fields where the needs were most immediate and acute and enable the work programme to be implemented effectively and expeditiously. Although this was supported by the Technical Committee of Experts at its different meetings, the staff level of the Population Programme Centre has remained until the end of 1973 the same as it was on 1 September 1969. A number of projects had to be postponed or transferred to other UN agencies because of this (See Section III).
25. From 1 January 1974, additional posts of regional demographic advisers, including one on population programmes and policies, and a secretariat post on the country case studies have been approved by the UNFPA, which would improve the situation considerably, although still at a lower level than had been anticipated.

#### V. Eighth Session of the Conference of African Statisticians

26. The eighth session of the Conference of African Statisticians was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 21 to 30 November 1973. The Conference discussed among others the Household Surveys Programme on which a separate report will be given. It was also informed of demographic training and research at the RIPS and the IFORD.

27. One of the recommendations of the Conference was that the sessions of the Conference of African Demographers should in future precede those of the Conference of African Statisticians so that the statistical implications of the deliberations of the former could be considered by the latter. (Report of the eighth session of the Conference of African Statisticians (E/CN.14/611, para. 287). The Conference of African Demographers might wish to take note of this and make appropriate recommendations about the timings of future sessions, taking account of the fact that population programmes - including studies and research, methodological and national demographic field surveys, demographic training, formulation, implementation and evaluation of population programmes and policies - cover a wider range than statistics, involving among others Government departments on planning, public health, education, employment, etc. and recognizing interdisciplinary nature of population.

#### VI. Seminar on Statistics and Studies of Migration and Urbanization

28. This Seminar was held in Moscow, USSR, from 11 to 22 September 1972. Some relevant recommendations of the Seminar and the actions taken on them are given below.

29. The ECA secretariat was requested to make further studies on the comparative analysis of the problems of definitions and measurement of urbanization of African countries.

30. As an operational definition for the purposes of international comparison, the ECA secretariat agreed to expand the present definitions and to show, in separate categories, in addition to towns of 20,000 and more persons, each administrative seat as well as places with population between 5,000 to 20,000. To help the ECA secretariat in these tasks, the countries were requested to provide the ECA secretariat with the required data which would make such classification possible.

31. The secretariat has already written to the Government and obtained from almost all of them the required data upon the analysis of which the concepts and definitions of urban population would be given.

32. As a result of another recommendation of the Seminar, the ECA secretariat is revising the figures on population densities and urban populations in order to obtain a better picture of population distribution in the different countries in terms of the population densities of sub-national administrative units and the densities on cultivated land.

33. The Seminar also recommended that as the factors influencing family size especially in the urban areas act in different directions and vary in force, depending on the economic and social conditions, a study of these factors would provide a clearer picture of the pattern of interrelations, trends and prospects, and help required in planning for economic and social development. This study now forms a part of the country case studies of inter-relations of population growth and economic and social development.



VII. Working Group on Fertility Levels and Differentials in Africa and  
The Prospects for the Future

34. This Working Group was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 18 to 22 December 1972. Some of the relevant recommendations of the Working Group and the actions taken on them are given below.

35. The UN, ECA and other organizations were urged to finance and support special fertility and socio-economic surveys and studies to determine the specific causes of high as well as low fertility where relevant. The ECA secretariat has assisted the University of Ibadan in formulating a project on the study of sub-fecundity and also participated in a technical group meeting on it.

36. The Working Group also adopted draft resolution for action by the Commission which was considered by the ECA Technical Committee of Experts at its fourth meeting held from 27 to 31 August 1973.

VIII. Seminar on Techniques of Evaluation of Basic Demographic Data

37. This Seminar was held in Accra, Ghana, from 16 to 27 July 1974. Some of the matters arising from the Seminar are given below. The Seminar on evaluation of censuses and sample survey data to be developed by the UN and the ECA and placed for consideration before the Conference of African Statisticians and the Conference of African Demographers with the view to having such plans integrated into the design and conduct of population censuses and surveys.

38. Such a plan is being evolved by the United Nations Headquarters and the ECA secretariat as recommended by the Seminar; the ECA secretariat is also up-dating a previous study on post-enumeration surveys in Africa using recent experiences.

39. The ECA secretariat will also undertake shortly the up-dating, recommended by the Seminar, of its studies on the problems of measuring the economically active population in Africa and the evaluating the data on economic activities.

40. Recognizing the inter-disciplinary approach by the United Nations to population, the Seminar recommended that the courses at the UN-sponsored institutes should cover subjects such as Sociology, Economics, Mathematics, Statistics, and other relevant topics as ancillary to technical demography, so that the trained demographers could further specialize in the various branches of demography such as Social Demography, Economic Demography, Mathematical Demography, and Demographic Sample Surveys.

41. This recommendation has been brought to the attention of the Advisory Committees and Governing Councils of the Regional Institute for Population Studies in Accra and the Institut de Formation et de Recherche Demographiques in Yaoundé. This Seminar also recommended that its report and a selected number of technical papers be published under the ECA's African Population Studies series in order to ensure the widest possible dissemination. Steps have already been taken to bring out the African Population Studies No. 2 in line with this recommendation.



IX. Meeting on Training in Demography and Population Programmes

42. This meeting was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 22 to 26 January 1974. Among the recommendations made at the meeting are the following:

43. A survey of existing training institutes dealing with population in the region to be organized by the ECA secretariat; that ECA's information service and clearing house activities be expanded in order to provide to the African countries services comparable to those in other regions; strengthening of demographic content of the existing middle-level statistical courses; organization of middle level demographic courses, upon demand at the regional demographic training centres; organization of short-term courses of different types and duration such as forum or symposia on population matters for policy makers, courses for administrators, demographic courses for those with no advanced demographic training and refresher and specialized courses on selected topics; appointment of short-term consultants from one African country to another by the UN and the ECA; expansion of regional advisory services of the ECA to provide adequately for needs in demographic training and research.

44. Matters relevant to the UN-sponsored demographic training centres in Africa recommended by the meeting have already been considered by the Directors of these centres in their first meeting also held in Yaoundé from 28 to 29 January 1974. Action on the recommendations are being taken by the ECA.

X. Regional Inter-Agency Co-ordination Meetings on Population and Meetings of Non-UN Organizations interested in Population Programmes in Africa

45. The second and third Regional Inter-Agency Co-ordination Meetings on Population were held from 19 to 21 April 1972 and from 1 to 3 May 1973 respectively. The second and third meetings of the Non-UN Organizations interested in Population Programmes in Africa followed the meetings of the UN Agencies and were held from 24 to 26 April 1972 and from 7 to 9 May 1973 respectively.

46. The reports of these meetings are before the Conference and some recommendations are given below:

47. The revision and the up-dating of the consolidated list of projects and experts in Africa was recommended and this is being done. The recommended collaboration between the UN Agencies and the UN sponsored Demographic Training and Research Centres in undertaking ad hoc training courses and specific research projects was discussed recently at the Seminar on Training in Demography and Population Programmes in Africa.

48. As recommended, the UNFPA coordinators in Africa are also being invited to the Co-ordinating Meetings as well as to the Conference of African Demographers.