



52385

**UNITED NATIONS**  
**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**



Distr.  
GENERAL  
E/ECA/PSD.5/29  
22 February 1988  
Original: ENGLISH/  
FRENCH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fifth Session of the Joint Conference  
of African Planners, Statisticians  
and Demographers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 21-28 March 1988

Progress Report on the Activities of the  
Demographic Training and Research Institutes - RIPS (Accra)  
and IFORD (Yaounde)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGES
I. RIPS : Training and Research	1 - 8
II. IFORD : Training and Research	9 - 14

## REGIONAL INSTITUTE FOR POPULATION STUDIES (RIPS)

A. Background and Objectives

1. The Regional Institute for Population Studies which was established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Ghana in 1972 continues to serve the English-speaking African member States by providing them with their high-level manpower capable of generating demographic data, analysing and evaluating them, integrating them in planning development and appreciating the complex linkages between demographic, social and economic phenomena. The instruments for attaining these goals have been the provision of intensive classroom training and guided research as well as the organization of adhoc courses, in-service training, special courses, workshops, seminars and meetings, and the development of a demographic information and documentation system.

2. The ECA has been the executing agency for the project since 1980 having taken over this responsibility from the first executing agency since 1972, i.e. The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCO), following the decentralization of certain regional activities by the U.N. to the regions. (Vide Resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977).

B. Progress towards Regionalisation

4. In recognition of the important contributions made by the Institute to demographic training and research, the Conference of Ministers of the ECA in March 1979 called for the full regionalisation of the Institute and asked the Executive Secretary of the Commission to implement its resolution, 367(XIV), on this matter. As a result, new Statutes were drawn up and were adopted in 1980 by the Sixth meeting of the Conference of Ministers of ECA in its resolution 393(XV) and transmitted to the UN General Assembly for approval. This endorsement was given later in December 1982 in G.A. Decision 37/444 after the Eight meeting of the Conference of Ministers of ECA revised the Statutes in Tripoli in April 1982 as called for by the Assembly.

5. The ECA, as the executing agency, has been working consistently towards the full regionalization of the project through ensuring greater participation of member States in the administration of the Institute and in the provision of financial support to it. To this end, the Commission had embarked on establishing modalities for restructuring the Institute taking due account of the implication of the exercise for the new Statutes, conditions of service including salary scales and allowances for all categories of staff concerned. Work has therefore been done on the preparation of new staff regulations and draft amendments to the Statutes. In this regard, the Twelfth meeting of the Governing Council of the Institute sitting in Accra on 20 February 1987, discussed the proposal for restructuring made by the Joint meeting of the Extraordinary Session of the Governing Council of RIPS and IFORD which met in Addis Ababa on 6 March 1986 under the chairmanship of the Executive Secretary of ECA who is also Chairman of the Governing Council. The Council then set up a Committee to examine the situation and make suitable recommendations. Members of the Committee were the representatives of the Governments of Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe as well as of ECA, UNFPA, RIPS and University of Ghana.

6. The first meeting of the Committee which was held at RIPS, Legon, Accra on 21 February 1987 discussed the restructuring issues identified above and proceeded to work out a timetable for implementing the changes called for. ECA and RIPS

were then to go back and prepare background papers for another meeting of the Committee which actually took place as scheduled in Addis Ababa during 21 - 22 April, 1987. The Committee examined and approved a list of proposed amendments to the Statutes and also the proposed Draft Staff Regulations including salaries and allowances. The recommendations of the Committee on all issues affecting the restructuring will be presented to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Governing Council of RIPS and thereafter to the Joint Conference of Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, the ECA Conference of Ministers, ECOSOC, and finally the UN General Assembly. If all goes well, it is envisaged that full restructuring, if funds would be made available by member States, should come into effect on 1 January 1989.

C. Work Programme and Activities 1985/86 - 1986/87

7. The activities of the Institute over the past two academic years were focused on (a) Classroom Training (b) Research (c) Publications and Information Service (d) Provision of Advisory Service (e) Library Facilities; and (f) Staffing and Staff Development.

(a) Classroom Training

8. Students from English-speaking African countries were admitted to three different major levels of courses as provided for within the Institute's terms of reference. Generally, students underwent theoretical and practical training in demography and cognate disciplines as the description which follows illustrates.

(i) Twelve-Month M.A. Degree in Population Studies

9. This course which replaced the old Graduate Diploma course was first started in October 1985 with an intake of 44 students drawn from Botswana, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia. (See Appendix A). These students were the first group of students for this new degree programme of the University of Ghana. The course ended on 30 September 1986 and 35 of the 43 students who completed it passed the final examination. Since candidates who fail in the first instance are given the opportunity to resist only once more, the Institute managed to arrange for 6 of those who failed to do so in June 1986. Four of these candidates passed. This means that 39 of the 43 original candidates of the 1985/86 class passed the M.A. degree examination.

10. The performance of the next batch of students who were admitted in October 1986 for the 1986/87 academic year improved considerably. Of the thirty-three candidates only one failed the examination. The geographical spread of the origins of the students were Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

11. For the next academic year which will begin in October, 1987, some 40 students out of 65 applicants have been screened for admission to the same M.A. degree course in Population Studies.

12. Although the course has been ~~proven~~ rather very popular, both standards of admission and work expected of the students have been quite high. Candidates who must be nominated by their Governments must also have good honours degree from an

approved University in any of the following subjects: Social sciences, Statistics, Mathematics, and the natural sciences. The programme was implemented through lectures, tutorials, seminars, laboratory work, continuous assessment, independent library research, practical field survey and individual research work.

13. The course of study involved, 1,104 hours of instruction and training which was evenly divided between course work (552 hours) and research (552 hours). Altogether, there were five main courses: (i) Technical Demography (ii) Substantive Demography (iii) Stable Population, Linear Models, Sampling Techniques, and Actuarial Methods as one course or Population and Development, Interrelationships as the other (iv) Research and Computational Method which was examined through continuous assessment and (v) Individual guided research and dissertation writing.

14. Besides, there were introductory and supportive courses such as Basic Mathematics, Political Economy of Africa, and Sociology of the Third World. These lay foundations for introducing students to the main discipline of Population Studies. Also all M.A. students participated in actual field survey on a relevant topic during the holidays following the Lent Term. The entire exercise was planned and controlled from start to finish by the students guided by supervisors. Finally, during the fourth term, the student prepared a dissertation of about 20,000 words for presentation at an open seminar attended by staff and students and evaluated by external and internal examiners as well. This seminar evaluation together with the performance in the written examinations (3 papers) plus the continuous assessment based on laboratory exercises and practical field survey work formed the basis of the award of the M.A. degree in Population Studies of the University of Ghana.

(ii) The Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) Degree Course

15. This course lasts at least twelve months with possibility of extension of fellowship to eighteen months maximum duration. It used to be the old M.A. degree by thesis work which has now been renamed, M.Phil. The course consists of some lectures, individual guided reading and research and mainly the preparation of a thesis of not more than 60,000 words on a topic of interest and socio-economic relevance to the development of the candidate's country. The thesis when completed is evaluated by internal and external examiners appointed by University of Ghana.

16. During 1986/87, nine candidates completed their M. Phil. theses. Of these, four had been awarded the degree by the University; another four had their theses under examination by appointed examiners of the University; while one has been revising his thesis for resubmission following comments received from the internal and external examiners. The nine candidates concerned comprised three Ghanaians, two Nigerians, one Sierra Leonean, one Sudanese, one Ugandan, and one Zambian.

17. Also during the period 1986/87 work was continuing on the preparation of ten other M. Phil. theses by four candidates from Ghana, three from Nigeria, one from Liberia and two from Sierra Leone.

18. For both completed and on-going theses, candidates employed a variety of sources of data. Thus of the 19 candidates, six worked or are working with available census data from their countries of origin; eight used or are using data generated by them directly from a field survey financed by the Institute and conducted by them in their own countries of origin; and five wrote or are writing their theses with the World Fertility Survey data for their respective countries. In fact, all the five candidates have used the Nigerian Survey data which indeed has been virtually analysed exhaustively, perhaps more than any other conducted in the continent.

(iii) Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.d.) Degree in Population Studies

19. There were only three candidates enrolled for the course of study leading to the Ph.D. degree in Population Studies. These were students with a high standard of performance in the M.A./M. Phil. examinations. Admissions have been strictly restricted to ensure that those enrolled would be given adequate supervision and guidance. The programme, apart from limited course work, is mainly done by thesis work. The enrolled candidates are from Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

(b) Research Activities

20. The conduct of research by staff and students continued to feature prominently in the work of the Institute during the reporting period. Mention has already been made of the field survey undertaken by the twelve months M.A. students as part of the continuous assessment of their progress.

21. The 1985/86 class planned and conducted their survey field work at Obosomase near Aburi not very far from Accra; while the 1986/87 class organized their survey on "Proximate Determinants of Fertility" in Mpraeso, Kwahu District of Ghana in April 1987.

22. Senior staff members of the Institute also conducted their own individual research and provided in addition research support to Government programmes upon request. One important and continuing area of research focusses on the robust estimation of fertility and mortality under non-stable conditions which has relevance to the prevailing conditions in Africa and developing countries in general. Jointly with U.N. Population Division, New York and Population Division, Addis Ababa, work is also being done on measuring differentials and trends in infant and child mortality in Ghana, Kenya and Lesotho. Besides, a study of fertility as a factor in population growth using census and rural data is being undertaken. Another area of interest is the research into the medical, socio-economic and demographic implications of early childbearing in Africa. This has been going on within the context of the review of adolescent fertility and fertility-related behaviour. Interest is also centred on the application of growth curve analysis to repeated events in Demography.

23. Computer use and applications have greatly facilitated the research work of both staff and students. All have generally been benefiting from the installation of the computer main frame (Wang VS 80) and of relevant softwares and packages for data analysis and evaluation. The word processor is now widely used by students for writing their essays and theses.

(c) Publications and Information Service

24. Resource and logistical constraints have impeded progress in the publication activities of the Institute in the period. However, it was still possible to publish two editions of the RIPS newsletter, i.e. the combined numbers 27, 28, and 29 for July 1985 to December 1986 and number 30 for January to June 1987. Work has been continuing on publishing number 31 by about the end of the year 1987.

25. The Institute has revived the publication of the RIPS monograph series. Editorial work on Monograph No. 2, which runs into 548 pages, has been completed. The manuscript is now with the printer. Editorial work on Monograph No. 3 is also far advanced and work has commenced on processing, for immediate publication, five Working Papers and one Occasional Paper submitted by the academic staff of the Institute.

26. Apart from official publications, the personal research of individual staff members of the Institute has yielded quite a good crop of research papers published during the period in international as well as local academic media. As well as currently produced documents, the Library continues to provide PIDSA publications and related population information to people on demand.

(d) Provision of Advisory Services

27. In conformity with previous practice, the Institute, in spite of its staffing problems, continued to provide advisory services upon request to governments and institutions mainly in the area of demographic data collection, analysis and evaluation. Staff members of the Institute served on the Advisory Board of the School Mapping Survey at the request of the Government of Ghana. Assistance rendered so far include participation in planing and designing the survey and help with the actual execution of the field work. It is expected that the Institute will also help with processing the survey questionnaires on its computer.

28. Other examples of advisory and technical support services provided involved the participation of three staff members of the Institute in the work of the Planning Committee of UNFPA sponsored programme for the commemoration of the "The Day of 5 Billion Population" in Ghana. The Institute provided a resource person for the 1987 Family Planning Week celebrations organized by the Ghana National Family Planning Secretariat. It is collaborating in the provision of updated population projections for the work of the Post-Basic Education Committee of the Ministry of Education. Besides, a staff member has been serving on the University Rationalization Committee.

(e) Library Facilities

29. The Population and Social Science Library which is jointly owned by the Institute and ISSER continued to be the main information support base for teaching and research at the Institute. Its stock of specialized publications on Demography, Statistics, Economics, Sociology and other cognate subjects in the social sciences, were augmented in the period. At present the total collection of the Library which is very rich in Africana, is nearing 20,000.

30. Important and well known journals in Demography and related disciplines (Economics, Sociology, Statistics, etc.) were regularly subscribed to. New publications were acquired through purchases and use was made of International Photocopy Coupons to acquire important articles from publications which were not available at the Institute.

31. Efforts were made to improve the reading environment. With the restoration of the central air-conditioning and the provision of 6 stand-by ceiling fans, the Library has become a more congenial place for study and research all the year round.

(f) Staffing and Staff Development

32. The professional staff position at the Institute remained virtually unchanged in the period, 1985/86 to 1986/87. There were only two significant additions. First, the teaching and research staff was augmented with the return from leave of absence to the Institute of one Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow. Second, the Library management staff was strengthened by the return of one Assistant Librarian, to the Institute after a long period of official leave of absence.

33. The position with respect to filling all the eight senior professional posts provided for in the budget of the Government of Ghana also did not improve. Presently, there are three such senior professionals at post; two have been away on extended study leave abroad while three have been vacant for quite some time. The effect of the vacancies and absences was the continued heavy reliance on the temporary assistance of part-time Lecturers for teaching and Graduate Assistants for supervising and guiding students in doing their laboratory exercises.

APPENDIX ATable IA

Students admitted to RIPS for the 12 Months  
M.A. degree course in Population Studies  
by Nationality (1985/86 - 1986/87)

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number of Students Admitted</u>	
	<u>1985/86</u>	<u>1986/87</u>
Botswana	1	-
Ethiopia	3	3
Gambia	2	0
Ghana	11	7
Kenya	3	2
Lesotho	1	0
Liberia	2	2
Malawi	1	0
Mauritius	0	0
Nigeria	9	10
Sierra Leone	1	2
Somalia	2	0
Sudan	2	1
Tanzania	1	0
Uganda	3	3
Zambia	2	2
Zimbabwe	0	1
<b>Totoa</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>



Table 2A

Students Registered for the M.Phil. and Ph.D.  
in Population Studies at RIPS 1985/86 and 1986/87

Country	<u>Number of Students registered for M.Phil. and Ph.D.</u>	
	1985/86	1986/87
<u>(a) M.Phil.</u>		
Ghana	1	0
Liberia	0	1
Nigeria	2	2
Sierra Leone	2	0
Total	5	3
<u>(b) Ph.D.</u>		
Ghana	1	-
Nigeria	1	-
Sierra Leone	1	-
Total	3	-

INSTITUT DE FORMATION ET DE RECHERCHE DEMOGRAPHIQUES  
(IFORD)

A. Summary

This document reviews the various activities of the Institut de formation et de Recherche Démographiques (IFORD) during the 1986-1987 biennium and considers prospects for the next two years.

As far as training is concerned, the period covered corresponds to a transitional period between the former system of annual recruitment where two different classes of students, one in the first year and the other in the second year of the training cycle and the new system of recruitment every two years where only one class of students is at the Institute at any given time.

The main feature of this transitional period which was gone through without any major problems was the implementation of the various recommendations of the last Advisory Board meeting particularly with respect to training activities.

The situation with respect to the number of teaching staff which was very disturbing at the beginning of the period has improved over the past few months. Despite these difficulties, the main training programme and the other related activities were carried out under fairly satisfactory conditions.

As far as research promotion activities were concerned, the infant and child mortality surveys on which most of the Institute's research efforts were focussed are being phased out and the trend is now towards smaller projects. During the period, individual research activities were stimulated as a result of the stipulation that lecturers and researchers should produce at least one publishable article per academic year; the bulk of the old publications were maintained although adjustments were made where necessary to their contents and special efforts were undertaken to ensure that they were published regularly.

The financial and administrative management of the Institute suffered badly as a result of the non-payment of contributions of member States. To be able to keep operating, particularly to meet local expenditures, the Institute had to borrow from the United Nations component of its budget. It should also be noted that at the end of the period, the delay in transferring cheques by ECA under the system of temporary advances of funds seriously disturbed the activities of the Institute. The combination and duration of the two problems mentioned above might hamper the proper implementation of the mission assigned to IFORD.

The following is a brief overview of the main activities and future prospects of the Institute.

B. Brief overview of the main activities

1. Training Activities

In the training cycle of demographers, 30 students obtained the Diplôme d'Etudes Démographiques between 1986 and 1987; the diploma is issued at the end of two years of study. The students were from 13 member States namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Senegal, Togo and Zaire as well as Haiti.

There were nine drop-outs among the two batches of students most of them in the first year. There could be several reasons to explain such a large number of drop-outs: the relatively average level of candidates at the entrance examinations in 1984 and 1985, greater difficulty of option A students to correctly follow some courses because of the cancellation of some refresher or in-depth courses, and the cancellation of the first year in-take in October 1986 which did not allow at least two students of the fourteenth batch to repeat.

Academically, several innovations have been introduced following the suggestions of the Advisory Board.

The total number of scheduled lecture hours was revised downwards and work loads were spread relatively evenly among the various groups of students. As a result of the introduction of individual dissertation, the amount of research work carried out was increased and its quality improved at the cost of much more work for the teaching staff. In that connection, in view of the fact that considerable computer equipment is available, the topics of dissertations will be more technical in nature and will draw preferably on the data bank which is being constituted from the annual surveys carried out by the students; experiments were successfully carried out using this procedure during the 1986-1987 academic year.

The mathematics and probability courses were stopped, a computer science course was introduced which was separate from the former introductory course to the use of software, greater use was made of computers to teach many courses, various demographic analysis courses were merged and new courses on population problems were established; all these activities were completed during the 1986-1987 school year.

In view of the considerable number of drop-outs mentioned earlier on, it would be a good idea to thoroughly examine the possible relationships between the drop-out situation and the cancellation of the mathematics and probability courses and to consider appropriate solutions which would not fundamentally affect the trend towards standardizing and decreasing the hourly schedules for each group of students.

The following are the highlights of the other training activities:

a) Of the five researchers who took part in the training course on initiation to research during the period, two obtained the DEA of the University of Paris I, another successfully defended his dissertation in order to obtain the same diploma and a fourth was successful in his written examinations for the same diploma. It should be noted that the dissertation topics submitted for the DEA are the basis for the research work done by researchers during their training;

b) Two students of the Ecole de statistique of Abidjan undertook practical training at the Institute during the 1985-1986 school year;

c) The Institute organized the second training course for the introduction to statistics and demography in Djibouti;

d) IFORD actively participated in supervising the third refresher training course for African demographers held at Bamako in February-March 1986 on the topic "Mortality Analysis in French-Speaking Countries".

Following the entrance examination organized in April 1987, 39 students from 20 member countries and Haiti were admitted to the Institute; 34 of them are currently studying at the Institute. These 34 students are the fifteenth batch of IFORD students and the first real class of the biennial system of admission.

## 2. Research promotion activities

Research promotion activities comprise research work proper, publications and the organization of scientific meetings.

The following are the highlights of research activities:

a) The analysis of the Yaoundé infant and child mortality survey was continued; a total of eight studies were carried out, three of them by researchers of the training course for initiation to research. The situation is not as good for the other towns covered by the survey where no substantial analysis has been carried out despite repeatedly reiterated commitments at various occasions;

b) In pursuance of the eighth resolution of the Governing Council which recommended that every effort should be made to develop other research promotion activities, IFORD began developing a new research project on the medium-sized towns of Cameroon from the second term of 1986. The Rockefeller Foundation agreed to finance the project with effect from January 1987 for two years. The project actually started in March 1987. An initial working document, which was produced in June 1986 and submitted for discussion, is on the analysis of fertility at Bafia. The work is going on normally;

c) As far as individual research work is concerned, a total of 19 articles or statements for various scientific meetings were prepared by members of staff;

d) Various computer programmes were developed on the sole non-standard computer available at the Institute until December 1986; the programmes are used not only for file acquisition and utilization but also for teaching;

e) Three of the IFORD series of publications appeared during the period under consideration:

- i) Six issues of the Bulletin de liaison de démographie africaine came out; two of them were double issues;
- ii) Annales de l'IFORD : three issues were published according to the old format (survey reports or dissertations of trainees) and one issue was in the new format whereby the Annales are to be the forum for publishing the work of lecturers and researchers of the Institute; the inclusion of articles by external professionals is desired and encouraged;
- iii) The bulletin of the IFORD Documentation Centre 'IFORD-BIBLIO-INFO' which is the most recent publication under the project "Strengthening of the IFORD Documentation Centre" financed by IDRC which began in July 1986; four issues were published in 1987;
- iv) Records of the national seminar on population policies in Mali and in the series on infant and child mortality surveys:
  - a) Studies of some methodological problems related to Infant and Child Mortality Surveys, volume 1, 1985;
  - b) Report on the collection and utilization of Infant and Child Mortality Survey Data of Yaoundé, volume 2, Tome 1, October 1987;
  - c) Report of the collection and utilization of the Lomé Infant and Child Mortality Survey Data, volume 2, Tome 2, December 1987.

The reports on the Cotonou, Ouagadougou and Brazaville surveys as well as other studies already undertaken on such surveys will be published soon.

The Institute organized jointly with the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) in Yaoundé from 19 to 29 October 1987 an international seminar on "Mortality and Societies in Sub-Saharan Africa". The seminar was financed by UNFPA, IDRC and INED; 50 of the 81 participants in the seminar were from outside Africa.

### C. Prospects

Thirty-four students are currently studying at IFORD. They will be replaced in October 1989 by a new batch who will be admitted after the April 1989 entrance examination has been organized.

In view of the considerable drop-out rate observed over the past few years, the level of candidates taking the entrance examination should be improved and the chances of representation of each member country should be increased by organizing preparatory courses for the examination in the member countries.

Academically, the policy defined by the last Advisory Board meeting and fully implemented since October 1987 will be continued and improved if the level of teaching staff permits it.

While carrying out their individual research work as usual, trainees of the initiation to research course will actively participate in teaching particularly as tutorials lecturers. Moreover, their research topics will be linked to ongoing research in the Research Department as this will make it easier to better supervise their work.

Three improvement courses are planned for the next two years:

- a) A seminar on the incorporation of demographic variables into development planning to be organized in co-operation with the ECA Statistics Division;
- b) A seminar on "How to Prepare Research Projects" will be organized under the auspices of the Union for African Population Studies;
- c) Seminar on the utilization of population analysis software in co-operation with the ECA Population Division and financed by Canada.

Only one intensive course on the introduction to demography and statistics is planned in Niger in 1988. The Institute will, however, provide technical support for a similar course scheduled to be held in Equatorial-Guinea also in 1988. The publication of work already carried out on all the infant and child mortality surveys will bring an end to this activity.

The project on the population analysis of medium-sized towns of Cameroon will be continued.

A joint two-year IFORD-INED research project is planned on the theme "Mortality Analysis" from documents established by health services.

Special efforts will be made to ensure that the publications of the Institute come out regularly. However, such a minimum programme can be possible only if:

- a) Member States support the Institute morally and financially by honouring their commitments to it which has not been the case during the period under review;
- b) An appropriate legal framework as part of the restructuring of the Institute is found to carry out such activities and the procedure for the administrative supervision of the Institute by the executing agency such as transfers of funds and processing of administrative files is improved

Since IFORD was regionalised, it has been facing considerable financial difficulties as a result of the non-payment of member State's contributions. The Institute can therefore not meet its local operational expenditures. The record of contributions received in 1986-1987 was particularly poor. The Institute had to borrow from the United Nations component of its budget to be able to implement its programme in 1987. The current funding difficulties seriously endanger the future of the Institute. In the long run, IFORD might simply have to close its doors if, as part of the planned restructuring exercise no realistic decisions

are taken. Experience shows indeed that any restructuring option where a considerable portion of the budget of the Institute is assumed by member States is **liable** to failure in advance without a firm commitment by member States. The continuation of the Institute's mission therefore depends almost entirely on how member States meet their obligations to the Institute.