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**United Nations Economic Commission  
for Africa**

**Report on mission to Swaziland  
(15 November - 3 December 1992)**

**by**

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## INTRODUCTION

The mission was undertaken by ECA Demographic Statistics Adviser from 15 November to 3 December, 1992 at the request of the Director, Central Statistical Office (CSO) to assist in preparing a project document in respect of the 1996 Population and Housing Census of Swaziland.

On arrival in Swaziland, however, it was indicated at the briefing session that the terms of reference for the mission were to be as follows:

- to study the past methodologies used in the collection of census data and recommend a suitable methodology for the 1996 Population and Housing Census;
- to study the topics or items included in past census and recommend appropriate topics or items for inclusion in the 1996 Population and Housing Census;
- to prepare a draft questionnaire for discussion by users and other interested parties;
- to advise and recommend appropriate tabulation plan;
- to prepare a project document, including budget estimates, for submission to the Government and donor agencies; and
- to advise on cartographic work .

It was indicated that the above terms of reference had earlier been sent to ECA but it must have been received after I had left Addis Ababa for a mission to Nigeria from where I travelled directly to Swaziland.

The persons contacted during the mission are listed in Annex I. The mission wishes to express appreciation and thanks to the persons with whom discussions were held and also to other staff members of CSO and UNDP/UNFPA for their assistance and co-operation.

## BACKGROUND

Swaziland is maintaining decennial population censuses. The last such census was conducted in 1986 and a number of reports relating to the census have been published and a data dissemination seminar organized. The remaining report under the census publication plan is the volume on projections which was expected to be published in 1993. The preparation of the volume was at an advanced stage at the time of the mission.

In line with the established pattern of decennial censuses, the next census is due in 1996. Thus, during the seventh session of the ECA Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers (PSD) in Addis Ababa in March 1992, the Director of the CSO held discussions with ECA regional advisers and indicated that ECA assistance would be needed to prepare a project document as soon as possible to ensure early start of the preparations for the 1996 census.

Following the discussions with the Director of CSO, the UNFPA Country Director covering Swaziland was consulted to determine the notional level of assistance which UNFPA might provide for the Swaziland census; and subsequently the mission was arranged.

Since the 1986 population census, CSO has initiated steps for the institution of regular household surveys and to bring this about the Swaziland National Household Survey Capability Programme was formulated. The full implementation of the programme has been delayed for various administrative/financial reasons but a Demographic Survey considered to be an element of the envisaged series of surveys under the programme was conducted in 1991 and processing of the data was in progress at the time of the mission. The indications were that work on the survey would be completed by the third quarter of 1993.

A mission to update the household surveys project document overlapped the census project formulation mission.

#### Mission Activities

##### Briefing at UNDP

The mission was initially briefed by the UNFPA National Programme Officer. A couple of days later, preliminary discussions were held with the UNDP Resident Representative during which an overview of the objectives of the mission was given to the effect that by the end of the mission a draft census project document would have been prepared. On his part, the Resident Representative called the attention of the mission to the "UNDP Country Programme for Swaziland: 1993-1996" which he commended as useful background material for the mission. The briefing session with the Resident Representative involved also the UNFPA Regional Adviser on Population Education and Communication, based in Abidjan, who was also on mission to Swaziland at the time.

There was to have been a debriefing session with the Resident Representative at the end of the mission but due to his absence at the time, the Deputy Resident Representative was given a summary of the outcome of the mission in his stead.

Discussions with staff of CSO and other agencies

The main activity of the mission following the briefing sessions at UNDP, was the drafting of the census project document in collaboration with the head of the Demographic Statistics Section of the CSO on the basis of discussions with the Director and other staff members of CSO as well as contacts with other government ministries/departments and the University of Swaziland. Also, available documentation on past censuses, particularly reports of the last census were consulted.

In the initial discussions with the Director of CSO, the terms of reference, as indicated earlier in this report, were reviewed and it was agreed that, with the available time for the mission, the principal objective would be the preparation of the project document but aspects of the proposed terms of reference, notably the methodology for the census and suggestions regarding topics to be investigated in the census would be addressed, albeit briefly, in the document. In the case of census tabulations, the understanding was that proposals might be made at a later date and indeed the timing of its preparation was to be included in the census work plan. Likewise, it was indicated that the design of the census questionnaire needed to be taken up after determination of the census topics in conjunction with the tabulation plan and on the basis of consultations with data users as provided for in the census timetable specified in the project document.

As part of the strategy for assembling relevant information for the drafting of the census project document and also to initiate communication with relevant agencies at the outset of the preparations for the census and thus serve them notice regarding their anticipated active involvement in the census activities, appointments were made, at the request of the mission, for courtesy calls and/or preliminary discussions with the University of Swaziland and the following government ministries/departments:

- Ministry of Planning and Economic Development;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Health, Planning and Statistics Section;
- Registrar-General's Office, Civil Registration Section;  
and
- Surveyor-General's Office.

The contacts were to have been made during the first week of the mission in order to concentrate on the drafting of the document during the rest of the period but for one reason or another most of the appointments could be effected much later. In the case of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, it was only possible to brief the Permanent Secretary at the end of the mission about the main findings and the essential elements of the draft project

document including the view of the mission that a functional cartographic unit needed to be established at the CSO to ensure continuing census/survey cartographic capability at the department. The Permanent Secretary, however, indicated that perhaps the maintenance of a cartographic unit at CSO could be considered as a long-term measure whilst in the short-run the possibility of the Surveyor-General ensuring census/survey cartographic capability within its establishment might be examined.

With regard to the preparations for the 1996 census, the Permanent secretary stressed the need to ensure early dissemination of the census results.

Prior to the briefing of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the mission had discussions at the Surveyor-General's Office and the need for cartographic capability at CSO to support the department's statistical enquiries and data dissemination had been raised. The indications were that the Surveyor-General would support such a move. Indeed, it was recalled that the Surveyor-General's Office seconded a Senior Cartographer to Supervise the 1986 census cartographic work and he was still attached to the CSO. The arrangements, therefore, needed only to be formalized and put on a firmer basis.

Another issue raised in the discussion with the Surveyor-General was the resource maps which would be needed to update/prepare the census base maps. The mission was assured of the full cooperation and assistance of the Surveyor-General's Office in the acquisition of the required resource maps and was also informed that, indeed, plans were far advanced to take aerial photographs of parts of the country, for which recent topographic maps were not available, on cost sharing basis with the CSO.

At the Ministry of Education, the role of the Ministry in past censuses was recalled with the indication that similar support would be needed for the 1996 census. This would involve the use of selected secondary schools for the training of Form IV students and the selection of school teachers as trainers and supervisors during the census enumeration. The discussion was held with the staff member responsible for statistics and data base development and he was to brief the management of the Ministry on the issue.

The discussions at the Ministry of Health and the Registrar-General's department focused on the need for the active involvement of the relevant sections of the two establishments in the census activities to ensure adequate linkages between the census and the data collection systems in respect of health statistics and vital registration and thus facilitate harmonization of concepts and maintenance of complementarity of the different population data collection activities generally in the country.

There was also fruitful exchange of views with two faculty members of the Department of Statistics and Demography at the University of Swaziland. They were quite receptive to the proposal that some of the lecturers of relevant departments of the University be approached to collaborate with the CSO and selected professionals of other government agencies in preparing census evaluation and analytical studies at the census preparatory stage and subsequently to participate in undertaking those studies under the census publication plan. Indeed, there was even a suggestion by them that it was worth exploring the possibility of involving students of the Department of Statistics and Demography in the data collection aspects of the census enumeration to enable them gain practical experience in census taking.

#### Enumeration procedures

The mission also gave some consideration to enumeration procedures. It was noted that, generally, the past censuses had been conducted on de facto basis with the enumeration carried out in two stages, namely, preliminary and final. The preliminary enumeration was generally conducted during a period of about 10 to 12 days before the census reference night and the final enumeration undertaken 2 days following the reference night.

In the preliminary enumeration, the Census questionnaires were completed in respect of all persons who spent the night preceding the enumerators' visit to the respective dwelling units. The final enumeration was then supposed to involve revisits to the dwelling units to check whether respondents spent the census reference night in the dwelling units concerned and to make any necessary amendments.

It is doubtful, though, that enumerators did faithfully make the required amendments regarding changes in household composition let alone possible changes in characteristics of individuals. It is, therefore, desirable to consider different approaches in the next census. Indeed, if the enumeration is to be carried out in two phases then perhaps a listing of dwelling units/buildings together with their characteristics may constitute the first phase to be followed by the enumeration of individuals as the second phase. In this approach, the first and second phases may be regarded as the housing and population censuses respectively. The listing exercise will enable the enumerator become quite familiar with the layout of the EA and thus facilitate smooth and speedy enumeration of the population. In addition, the average size of EAs could be made such as would enable enumeration to be completed within a relatively short period. In this case, any advance enumeration should be confined to the institutional population possibly just a couple of days before the census reference night. This approach should include a publicity programme which would help

heads of household remember names and basic characteristics of their visitors who spent the census reference night in their respective dwelling units.

#### Cartographic preparations

The resource maps used in the 1986 census pre-enumeration cartographic work were layout maps of urban areas and aerial photographs. The indications also appear to be that due to time and other constraints the preparation of base maps did not receive adequate attention. Thus, the rural EAs were delineated on copies of the aerial photographs which had been enlarged to the scale of 1:15000 and this made the EA maps appear rather cluttered.

In the cartographic preparations for the 1996 census, adequate attention should be paid to the drafting of the base maps since the exercise is fundamental to the entire census mapping work. The compilation of the base maps should therefore start early to ensure that there will be enough time for its completion. Further, the maps should as far as possible contain only information which is relevant to the needs of the census field staff since too much detail may rather hinder the effective use of EA maps by enumerators.

Following the compilation of the base maps on the basis of available topographic maps, aerial photographs and the 1986 census enumeration maps, field work should be carried out to incorporate additional essential details and/or verify information obtained from the resource maps and then delineate EAs/SAs with particular attention to EA boundaries which can be readily identified on the ground by subsequent census field staff. Indeed, emphasis should be put on the plotting of features in proper relationship to each other and identifiable boundaries rather than precise measurement of distance and plotting of all housing units/homesteads.

#### Census project document

The initial draft of the project document was prepared with the collaboration of the head of the Demographic Statistics Section of the CSO during the mission and she was to review it after the mission and copies given to the Director of CSO and the UNFPA National Programme Officer.

In the preparation of the document, the census was considered as constituting a set of interrelated activities with the production and dissemination of the census data as the principal objectives. The project, however, has been conceived of being implemented in two major phases. The first phase will comprise the pre-enumeration activities which principally will be the establishment of the necessary machinery including the training of the required personnel, production of the enumeration maps,

determination of data requirements and the development of the instruments (questionnaire(s) and related manuals) for the collection of the necessary information.

The second phase will cover the enumeration including the establishment of the necessary field organization (setting up field offices and recruitment/training of enumeration field staff) and subsequent processing, evaluation/analysis and dissemination of the census data. In this connection, the budgetary provisions in the project document for the second phase in particular are expected to be updated progressively on the basis of lessons and additional information which will become available during the implementation of the first phase.

The major inputs being requested from UNFPA/other external sources include consultancies in cartography, census organization, sampling and data processing; training of personnel and equipment including microcomputers and vehicles.

It is expected that the equipment will mainly be purchased locally and hence there was the suggestion that Government execution of the project with the administrative support of the UNDP/UNFPA Office in Mbabane might be given some consideration. An alternative strategy might be Government/UNFPA execution of components involving local expenditures, namely, equipment, local personnel payments and costs of missions by members of the UNFPA Country Support Team and DESD execution of budget lines relating to international consultancies and overseas training.

The issue regarding determination of the executing agency was raised at the briefing session with the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative at the end of the mission. It was to be given further consideration and appropriate decision taken prior to the finalization of the project document.

#### Conclusions and recommendations

It was noted that, with the exception of the Government Statistician, the experience of the professional staff of the CSO in census planning and management was limited to the 1986 census.

An ad hoc Census Commissioner was appointed for that census with CSO senior staff as Deputy and Assitant Commissioners and counterparts to the U.N. Census Adviser. Lessons from this arrangement seem to suggest that it might be preferable for the Government Statistician to take direct responsibility for the census and provision made for short-term consultancies in various aspects of the census.

In the area of data processing, there seemed to be a need for long-term resident expert. However, following discussions on the issue, it was agreed that, perhaps, a better strategy, which would be cost-effective and also promote self-reliance, was provision of training fellowship supplemented with local workshops and appropriately spaced consultancy support as well as additional assistance from regional advisers under the UNFPA Country Support Teams.

It should be pointed out, though, that effective supervision and close monitoring of census activities by the Government Statistician and the Deputy Census Commissioner as well as institution of strict reporting system would be essential for the success of the strategy involving short-term consultancies in planning and conducting the census as indicated above.

The timely attention by the CSO to the preparation of the census project request is commendable. The need to follow this up with the establishment of the required administrative machinery, preparation of detailed time table of the various activities and to adhere closely to the work plan to ensure timely completion of the different phases of the census cannot be overemphasized.

In this connection, it is essential that the work on the 1991 Demographic survey is completed without further delay to enable the census preparatory activities to be started in earnest as indicated in the work plan.

CSO should also initiate action in respect of the legal basis for the census and take necessary steps to obtain Government approval of the census programme and commitment to deliver the required inputs timely.

Finally, it is recommended that the project request (or at least, the first phase) be given early consideration by all concerned to enable the training of personnel to start in 1993 as proposed in the project document.

**LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED  
DURING THE MISSION**

Ministry of Economic Planning and Development/CSO

1. Ms. A.P. Mkhonza, Principal Secretary
2. Mr. David Lukhele, Government Statistician
3. Mr. Levy Mamba, Statistician
4. Ms. Dudutsile Dlamini, Statistician and Head, Demographic  
Statistics Section
5. Mr. P.M. Nhleko, Senior Cartographer
6. Mr. S.W. Dlamini, Senior Assistant Statistician
7. Mr. Shadrack Fakudze, Transport Officer
8. Mr. Allan Findlay, Senior Statistician in charge of data  
processing (ODA data processing expert)

Surveyor-General's Office

1. Mr. Albert Mhlanga, Surveyor-General
2. Mr. Preston, Deputy Surveyor-General

Ministry of Education

1. Mr. Dawson

Ministry of Health

1. Mr. Amos Zwane, Health Statistician

Registrar-General's Office

1. Mrs. Beatrice S. Shongwe, Head, Civil Registration Section

University of Swaziland (Dept. of Statistics and Demography)

1. Dr. Gugulethu Gule, Lecturer
2. Mr. Solomon Dlamini, Lecturer

UNDP

1. Mr. Gary E. Davis, Resident Representative
2. Ms. Freda Panis, Deputy Resident Representative
3. Ms. Nosisa Mohammed, UNFPA Programme Officer