

POPULATION INFORMATION NETWORK FOR AFRICA



POPIN-Africa



UNITED NATIONS
Economic Commission for Africa

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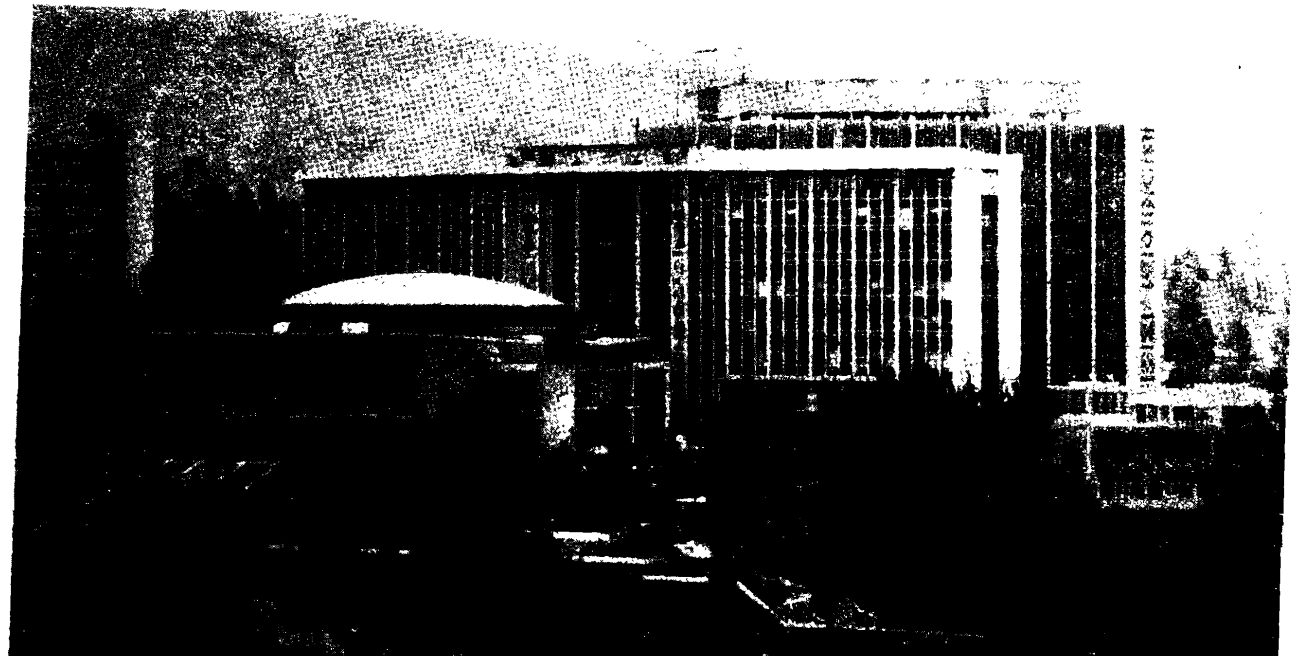


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A MATTER OF COMMITMENT

"COUNTRIES SHOULD DEVELOP APPROPRIATE MECHANISMS FOR DISSEMINATING AVAILABLE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA TO RESEARCHERS, POLICY-MAKERS, PROJECT OFFICERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC...."

Taken from the

Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African
Population and Self-Reliant Development, Arusha,
Tanzania, 1984.

POPULATION ISSUES IN AFRICA

The African Population Challenge

Africa, in 1990, is the home of some 650 million people. Its population is characterized by very high annual growth rates (about 3.0), very high fertility levels (with an average family size of about 6 children), very high infant mortality rate (about 97 per 1000), rather low estimates of life expectancy at birth (about 54 years), growing rural to urban migration rates, severe drought and desertification problems (United Nations, 1988). High fertility with moderate declines in mortality, particularly infant/child mortality, constitutes the major factor accounting for the rapid population growth rates. It results from a broad mix of social, economic and cultural factors including early age at marriage, the diminishing practice of prolonged breast feeding as well as sexual abstinence after childbirth; limited use of modern contraception; the relative low status of women; and the relative lack of clear population policies in many countries. The resulting high proportion of the young population (under 15) affects overall economic performance because of the implied high dependency burden on consumption patterns, capital formation, indebtedness, low productivity, and contributes to the inability of the governments to support productive investments due largely to the reduced propensity to save.

Therefore, the current economic crisis in the region is taking place in an environment characterized by rapid population growth rates, uneven population distribution, rapid rate of urbanization, massive unemployment, widening gap between the rich and the poor and consequent progressive pauperization of the

population inspite of national programmes of social and economic development. Africa's economic problems are severe and worsening.

Africa's per capita income steadily declined, between 1980 and 1987 by 2.6 per cent annully. Coupled with low productivity, high unemployment rates and the 'disintegration of the productive and infrastructural facilities', low agricultural output and reduction in food production, such a decline in the people's standard of living necessarily implies that African countries should take appropriate and timely action(s) to contain their population problems within their overall strategy to achieve sustained development.

ECA, since its establishment in 1958, has initiated and participated in concerted action for the socio-economic development of the region with a view to raising the people's levels of living. In the particular field of population, since 1961 when the population programme was set up within the ECA Secretariat, the objective had always been to create awareness among the ECA member States regarding the importance of population factors in development planning. In the 1960's and 1970's, the emphasis was placed on data collection in order to fill the gaps in the data required for socio-economic planning. To a large extent, countries have collected the required data particularly within the framework of the African census programme; but some still need assistance and training to fill their data gaps. Then, the focus was on data analysis and the promotion of sound population policies. The success achieved in this regard culminated in the adoption of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action (KPA). The implementation of its recommendations is now on the agenda. Therefore, ECA secretariat is providing assistance to member States in this field.

It is against this background that it became necessary to institute mechanisms to provide and disseminate population information to ECA member States.

POPULATION INFORMATION NETWORK FOR AFRICA (POPIN-AFRICA)

Background

The World Population Plan of Action (WPPA), adopted by the Second UN Population Conference in Bucharest (1974), among other things, enshrined the ideal of sharing population information on a global basis and urged all countries to establish mechanisms for effecting this. Accordingly, the United Nations Economic and Social Council by resolution 1979/33 (of 9th May 1979) called for the establishment of an international Population Information Network (POPIN) to assist in the development of national and regional infrastructures for population information. In order to promote compatibility among information services and to maximize available population information resources so as to improve the flow of population information globally, the global POPIN Coordinating Unit was established in 1981 within the UN Population Division, DIESA, New York.

In 1982, it was recommended that Population Information Network for Africa (POPIN-Africa) should be created to develop and expand population information activities within the African Region. Following the adoption of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action on Population (KPA) in January 1984, the Population Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) established a POPIN-Africa Coordinating Unit to: (i) facilitate the provision of population information facilities and services and, (ii) assist in the formulation and implementation of efficient population policies and programmes in the African region.

The eventual goal of POPIN-Africa is to enable, ECA member States to develop their own national information centres and infrastructures to support their decision-making and policies within the general context of their socio-economic development planning.

POPIN-Africa operates as part of a global population information network comprising other regional systems and networks in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, the Carribean, North America and Europe. The total resources of all these information services and activities are helping towards addressing the concerns as expressed in the WPPA of 1974. Moreover, it collaborates with the Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS), also located at ECA, to ensure adequate coverage of information and data on African population issues.

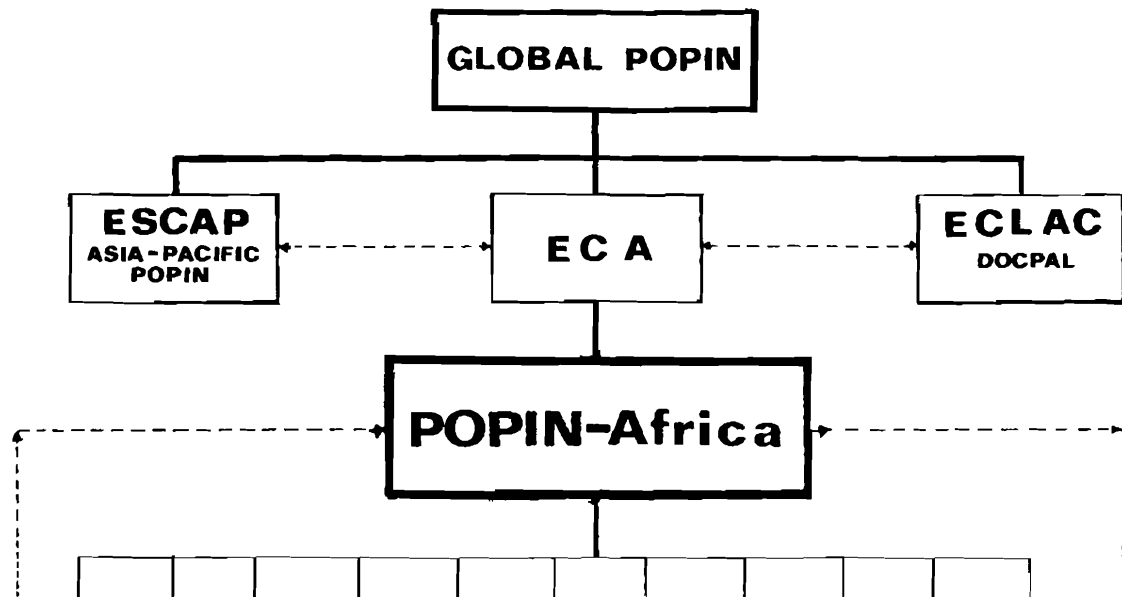
OBJECTIVES

Specific immediate objectives of POPIN-Africa are to:

- . improve the flow of information among institutions and organizations dealing with population information and data in Africa;
- . standardize the information in order to ensure compatible systems and services among ECA member States;
- . promote greater interest in population issues among policy makers, planners, media, and the genral public;
- . assist in the formulation of sound population policies and programmes by providing access to population information
- . collaborate with members of the international Population Information Network (POPIN) and other interested international agencies to improve the flow of information, world-wide:

STRUCTURE AND NETWORKING ARRANGEMENTS

POPIN-Africa is a decentralized network which comprises National Population Information Centres, (NPICs) and Subregional/Sectoral Participating Centres (SRPCs/SPCs). The following chart shows functional linkages and flow of information among the various nodes.



The Co-ordinating Unit and the subregional participating centres act as facilitators towards the realization of the eventual goal of POPIN-Africa.

National Population Information Centres (NPICs) have the responsibility to:

- . assess the information needs of planners and policy makers, other government and non-government institutions as well as individuals involved in national population related programmes;
- . develop a national network of the various sub-units and machineries engaged in population research and other activities at the country level;
- . act as a referral agent to resources within the country and assist in obtaining and disseminating information materials between the sub-units of the national network and the subregional and regional units;
- . provide the Co-ordinating Unit and the subregional participating centres with information on current activities, latest developments at the national level, specialized acquisitions in special subject areas, for inclusion in POPIN-Africa publications;
- . coordinate activities regarding the establishment of a national union catalogue which could be distributed by the Coordinating Unit to other participants of the network;
- . be responsible for promoting the network and its use among the user clientele at the country level;
- . co-operate with Coordinating Unit in the assessment of training and technical assistance needs.

Sub-regional/Sectoral Participating Centres

Currently, six training and research institutions working in the area of population and related fields are collaborating with the network as sub-regional/sectoral participating centres. These are:

- a. (IFORD) in Yaounde, Cameroon;
- b. Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) Accra, Ghana;
- c. Reseau Sahelien de Documentation Scientifique et Techniques (RESADOC) at Sahel Institute in Bamako;
- d. The Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC), located in Cairo, Egypt;
- e. The Eastern and Southern African Management Institute, (ESAMI) in Arusha, Tanzania;
- f. The Centre for African Family Studies, (CAFS) in Nairobi, Kenya.

Their major roles and functions are to:

- . compile information on sources of all periodicals/journals and similar publications emanating from the sub-region;
- . monitor and keep track of information about relevant seminars, conferences and workshops in their respective sub-regions;
- . establish a register of population personalities and researchers within the sub-region for use as research related contacts;
- . build strong, up-to-date collections of relevant journals, books and other non-conventional documents for the sub-regions;
- . develop data bases (both numerical and non-numerical) for the sub-region to provide

permanent stores of information and data to potential users;

- . act as a liaison between the Coordinating Unit, and participating centres.

The Coordinating Unit (CU)

The POPIN-Africa Coordinating Unit has the specific roles to:

- . co-ordinate and ensure a continuous flow and exchange of information among the various cooperating units at national, sub-regional, sectoral and international levels by establishing specialized files relating to the activities of the overall network;
- . act as liaison of the network to other regional and international centres;
- . publicize and promote the network's activities and services by issuing promotional literature including a newsletter, directories and inventories;
- . develop a series of manuals and guidelines on procedures, operations and policies to promote uniform standards for the processing and provision of population information;
- . compile lists of relevant sources of population information in the Region and offer appropriate referral services to network members as well as other interested users;
- . assess training and technical assistance needs for network operations, and co-ordinate, organize and make arrangements for appropriate training;
- . solicit and account for funds to support the network's operations.

TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY BODIES

●. Advisory Committee (PAAC)

The membership of the Committee comprises representatives of the subregional/sectoral/national participating centres, POPIN-Global, funding agencies and other institutions and persons with known interest and expertise in population information, education and communication. It meets every other year to provide advice and guidance on practical and technical matters for the effective implementation of the network's activities.



The Advisory Committee meets once every two years to review and advise on POPIN-Africa operations.

●. Technical Working Group (PAT)

PAT is a standing Committee which meets once in a year. It provides a forum for the SRPCs/SPCs, the NPICs, and the Coordinating Unit to exchange views and experiences and make recommendations regarding the technical issues involved in the implementation of the network to the Advisory Committee. Specifically, PAT: (i) monitors the development of data bases; (ii) ensures the development of national population

information centres; and, (iii) studies problems connected with the adoption of advanced technologies for population information processing.



POPIN-Africa Technical Working Group (PAT) meets once a year to discuss technical operational issues.

Working Group on Information Dissemination and Diffusion (PAWID)

In view of its orientation towards Information Education and Communication (IEC) strategies as a means of achieving wider coverage, dissemination and diffusion of population information, POPIN-Africa has involved press agencies, institutions and media practitioners in its network's activities through the establishment of PAWID.

PAWID reviews and advises the Advisory Committee on issues pertaining to the current status of population information and diffusion channels in the region; assists with the identification of agencies involved in the dissemination of population information; evolves strategies and plan of action for effective dissemination of information; and, advises on training, and resource requirements.



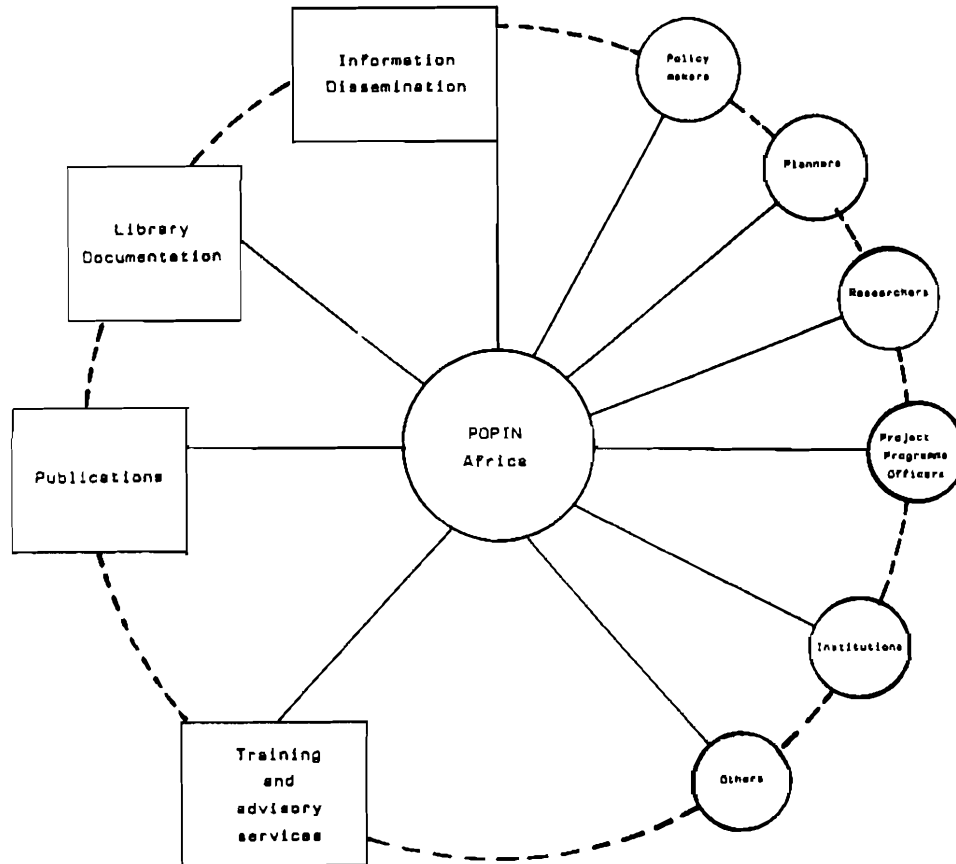
POPIN-Africa Working Group on Population Information Dissemination and Diffusion (PAWID).

The members of PAWID include Union of National Radio and Television in Africa (URTNA); Pan African News Agency (PANA); Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur la Population pour le Developpement (CERPOD); University of Ghana School of Communication Studies; Agence Presse Senegalaise (APS); News Agency of Nigeria (NAN); Ethiopian News Agency (ENA); Ethiopian Herald; Office of the National Committee for Central Planning (ONCCP) Ethiopia; Multimedia Services Limited (Communications Consultants, Nigeria).

OUTPUTS AND SERVICES

Some of the major services rendered by POPIN-Africa as indicated in Fig. 2 are:

OUTPUTS, SERVICES AND USERS



● Training

In order to ensure adequately trained personnel to undertake the delivery of population information, POPIN-Africa has established such programmes as:

- (i) advanced training through courses, seminars, workshops in specialized areas for professional and technical staff who head the NPICs/SRPCs/SPCs;
- (ii) on-the-job training and upgrading of skills to be undertaken at the national level;
- (iii) study tours, internships and attachements to enable members of the network share experiences in the handling of population information dissemination.



Training is part of the population information dissemination effort to strengthen institutional capabilities of network members.

The training programme is generally task-oriented to encourage greater efficiency during the implementation of the population information programmes by centres and networks within the region.

●. Documentation

Emphasis is put on the building up of strong population document collections at all levels of the network. The Coordinating Unit is developing a model regional population information reference centre to backstop national and subregional document collections. It liaises with institutions and centres both inside and outside the region to augment stocks of population literature on Africa.

At the national level, countries are to be encouraged to inventory national population information resources and to organize these into core collections upon which other resources can be built. The product of these national inventories is compiled into national bibliographies which form part of the POPIN-Africa Country Bibliography Series. At least one national bibliography is compiled and published per year. The SRPCs/SPCs assist in the preparation of these bibliographies.



Organized population information..... basis for sound policy decision.

At the subregional level, the participating centres aim at building good journal/periodical holdings of a subregional/sectoral interest to be shared with the countries of the respective subregion.

●. Databases

The Coordinating Unit currently has developed four data bases namely:

POPREF (bibliographic referral file on population) is the total merged bibliographic file representing inputs both from the Coordinating Unit and the sub-regional and sectoral participating centres. Presently, the total file stands at about 1500 records and is fast increasing. The participating centres can access the data base off-line through diskettes, and printouts which are distributed to them at quarterly intervals. Each year's additions to POPREF are also cummulated and published in the bibliographic journal known as POPINDEX-Africa; contains informative abstracts for each entry.



Various software programmes have recently been introduced at the Coordinating Unit for data base creation and management.

POPEX (African Population Experts) currently has 545 entries on experts working in the area of African demography and other population-related fields. African Directory of Demographers, is generated from this file and published once every two years.

POPINS (African Institutions and programmes working in Population) is a data base which comprises full profiles on identified population-related programmes, and projects, their location, resources, training facilities, staff, research, documentation, and other pertinent activities. A Directory and Sourcebook will be generated out of this database.

POPRES (African press information on population) constitutes a file on press-related information which can be retrieved by interested users, (e.g. journalists and communication experts). This file also includes information in the form of press releases, public addresses, and statements, interviews, communiques, briefs etc.

Work is in progress to broaden the scope of the data bases to include files covering the major aspects of the population workprogramme of the ECA Secretariat - Population projections, dynamics and policies.

●. Dissemination And Diffusion Of Population Information

In order to facilitate the flow of information among institutions, individuals, and organizations dealing with population issues in the region, Coordinating Unit in collaboration with mass media agencies, institutions and individuals, emphasizes the roles which these could play in influencing national population policies and in creating awareness and knowledge of population issues. The Pan-African News Agency and the Union of National Radio and Television Organization in Africa (URTNA) are examples of this form of collaboration. Close contact is also being forged with the Union for African Population Studies (UAPS) so as to disseminate information to this group of African Population Specialists.

Other related activities aim at providing information on users' needs and requirements, assisting

in designing appropriate techniques for the effective dissemination of population information and data, monitoring major meetings, conferences, and seminars pertaining to population related issues and using these avenues to organize exhibitions, video and audio presentations.

e. Clearinghouse

A clearinghouse is maintained at the Coordinating Unit. It serves as an information catalyst in initiating, developing, and supporting POPIN-Africa's activities both at the sub-regional and national levels. To ensure wider diffusion of population information, mailing lists are maintained.



Publications of the Coordinating Unit are distributed to pertinent organizations and individuals.

Through a duplicates programme (POP-AF DUPS), the clearinghouse assists members of the network to build their collections, by providing them with copies of duplicate materials held by the Unit. Document back-up services by way of photocopies, microforms and similar dissemination services are provided, when and where necessary.

●. Motivation and User-Sensitization

Subregional seminars on population information are used to draw attention to the role that organized population information could play in enhancing the development process by making readily available, those sources and materials of population information so necessary for the formulation and integration of population variables into development planning. Towards this goal, major regional meetings or seminars are monitored and where possible, utilized as avenues to exhibit population literature on Africa, as well as demonstrate the POPIN-Africa databases and other new techniques for accessing population information.

In addition to these seminars, efforts are directed at promoting country awareness using all available related national gatherings or seminars to provide information about POPIN-Africa. Moreover, the venue for POPIN-Africa Advisory Committee meetings are rotated in the member countries to provide an opportunity for involving national professionals.

●. PUBLICATIONS

The following are some of the project's major publications:

African Population Profile

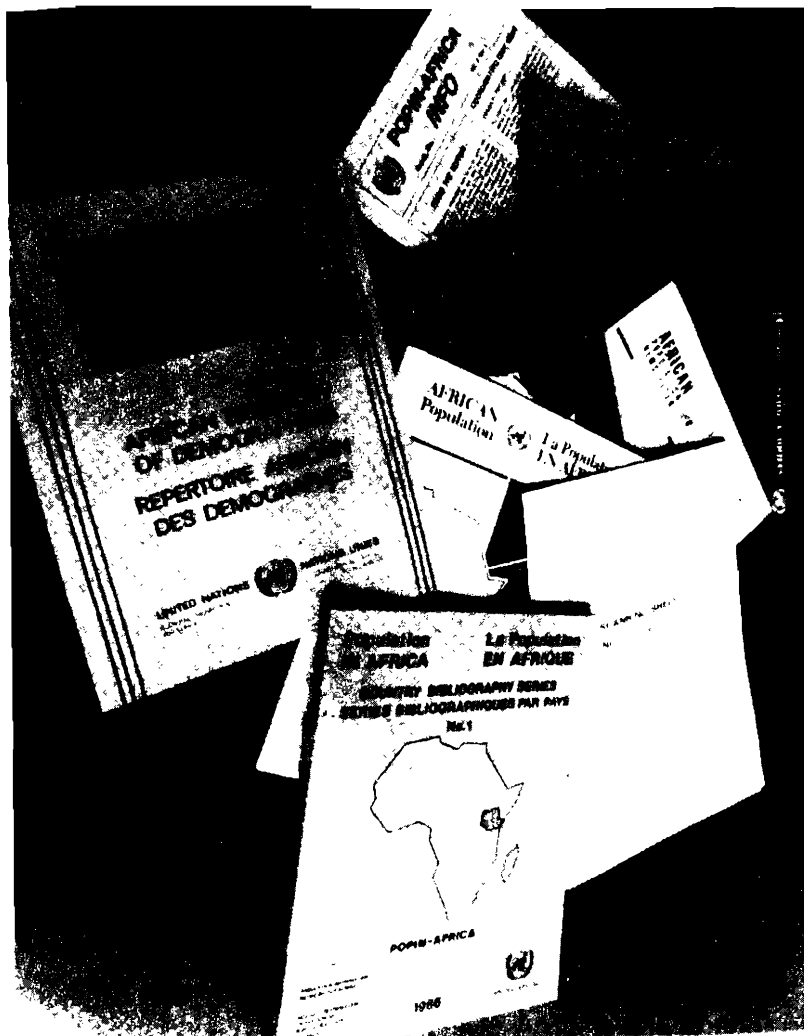
First published in 1984, this popular publication presents information on population issues in an easily, accessible form including demographic and socio-economic characteristics, perceptions of population growth and policies are presented through colourful charts and maps. A revised and updated edition in both English and French was prepared in 1989.

African Directory of Demographers

It provides biographical information on demographers and population specialists involved in African demography and related subjects. It is published once every two years, in English and French.

Popindex-Africa

It is a bibliographical index covering all published and unpublished documents available on population and other related fields on African countries. It is a ready source of references that informs planners, policy-makers, and researchers on population matters in the Region. It is published annually. Each issue carries an average of 200 literature summaries in English and French sorted by subject, country, author and title categories.



Promotion and dissemination of information are often made through various publications.

POPIN-Africa Country Bibliography Series

This series is intended to promote the sharing of information on population issues among ECA member States. It constitutes a national inventory of population information resources. Three issues covering Kenya, the Sahel and Ghana have been produced to date.

African Population Newsletter: carries articles and news on population issues, and serves as an instrument for reporting on the status of population activities in Africa. It is published twice a year in English and French. Since 1986 each issue has focussed on specific themes such as fertility and family planning; mortality and morbidity; the role of women in the African development process; population data-collection, and analysis; training and research; population information to highlight some of the recommendations of the KPA.

POPIN-Africa Info: first issued in 1988, furnishes information on recent developments within the network. It is published quarterly in English and French.

Scanning Sheet is a monthly select list of publications intended to alert both network members and the general public about new literature in the field.

FUNDING

●. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Is the largest multilateral funding source of population assistance, worldwide. It is the main source of financial support for the network. UNFPA is funding the POPIN-Africa Coordinating Unit in Addis Ababa, and the national components of the network.

●. International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

The IDRC Support has considerably enabled the improvement of the documentation activities of the network. It has provided consultants to assist with the reorganization of the library and documentation activities of the subregional participating centres with a view to facilitating the participation of IFORD, the CDC

and the Sahel Institute as POPIN-Africa participating centres. These grants have made it possible for these centres to recruit additional staff, acquire equipment and population documents and generally improve on current infrastructures at the subregional level of the network.

o. Other Sources

Other institutions are also providing support to the network members, such as the Rockefeller Foundation which has financially assisted the Centre for African Family Studies in its documentation activities. Furthermore, the Centre for Population and Family Health at Columbia University, USA, has also given technical support to CAFS.

NETWORK MEMBERS (SRPCs/SPCs)

Institut de Formation et de Recherche Demographiques (IFORD), P.O. Box 1556, Yaounde, Cameroun.

The Institute, established in 1972 provides training in demography and other related fields to 25 French-speaking African countries. It also conducts research in demography in these target countries and publishes its findings in its periodical entitled Bulletin de LIAISIN. IFORD has a computerized data base using CDC/ISIS software for the processing of non-numerical information materials.

- Contact person: Mr. Owono Mbida, Documentalist

Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS),
University of Ghana, P.O.Box 96, Legon, Ghana.

Also established in 1972, RIPS's mandate is to promote and strengthen knowledge and awareness of population factors in development planning in English-speaking African countries by offering training and research in population and related fields.

RIPS, unlike the other SRPCs and SPCs, is located within the premises of the University of Ghana, Legon. It provides training to English-speaking African countries

in population and related fields leading to the Ph.D degree. Publications of the Institute include working papers, a Newsletter, Monograph series, occasional papers and bibliography series. In 1988, RIPS compiled the POPIN-Africa Country Bibliography Series (CBS) No.3 on Ghana, and for several years, RIPS published the PIDSA Abstracts for the Population Information and Documentation Systems for Africa (PIDSA) project, a project which contributed to the establishment of POPIN-Africa.

- Contact person: Mr. R.A. Cantey, Senior Documentalist

The Reseau Sahelien D'Information et de Documentation Scientifiques et Techniques (RESADOC), P.O.Box 1530, Bamako, Mali.

This is part of the Sahel Institute in Bamako, Mali which covers seven Sahelian countries. It links at various levels, documentation centres in order to organize the collection, processing and diffusion of scientific and technical information within the Sahel region. Its participation in POPIN-Africa ensures the strengthening of the population information component of Sahel Institute's activities.

- Contact person: Mr. Samba Aw, Coordinator RESADOC

Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC)

Established in 1963, under the joint sponsorship of the United Nations and the Government of the United Arab Republic of Egypt, it is an inter-regional Centre serving both Africa and Asia. It provides demographic training at various levels leading to higher degrees at doctoral levels; undertakes research in population and related fields for interested governments and other organizations; and maintains computerized databases using the CDS/ISIS software programme. Among its major publications are the monographs series, working, research and occasional papers.

- Contact person: Dr. Hussein Abdul-Aziz Sayed Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS), P.O.Box 60054, Nairobi, Kenya.

Located in Nairobi, Kenya, it was created in 1976 as a regional training centre for the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Africa-Region (IPPF-AR). It became a sectoral participating centre of POPIN-Africa in December 1985 with responsibility to cover information and documentation in family planning and related topics. In 1987, CAFS adopted the INMAGIC bibliographic software for processing the large and growing collection of books, periodicals in family planning and operations research.

- Contact person: Ms. Sophie Azorbo, Assistant Information/Documentation Officer

The Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI), P.O.Box 3030, Arusha, Tanzania.

ESAMI recently joined the network as a sectoral participating centre to cater for East and Southern Africa. ESAMI performs a leading role in the region as a training centre for performance management. It has developed documentation and information services and also serves as a reference centre in several management fields. An increasing sector in this activity is health, population and communication.

- Contact person: Mr. Augustes Musana, Head, Library and Documentation Unit.

Corrigendum

p.22: Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC) should read:
"Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC), 2 Lebanon Street, Cairo, Egypt".

Under contact person: please read only "Dr. Hussein Abdul Aziz Sayed".

p.23 top - insert: **"Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS) P.O. Box 60054, Nairobi, Kenya.**

"...COUNTRIES SHOULD STRIVE TO SET UP POPULATION INFORMATION NETWORKS WHICH PROVIDE AN IMPERICAL BASE FOR PROJECT FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION."

Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development.

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