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**Working Group on Organization, Content
and Methodology of Household Surveys**

Addis Ababa, 15-19 October 1979

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE AFRICAN HOUSEHOLD
SURVEYS CAPABILITY PROGRAMME (AHSCP)**

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Origins of Programme

1. In 1971 as a result of the request of several African countries which had had to postpone their population censuses due to lack of adequate finances, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) set up the African Census Programme (ACP). The ACP made it possible for about 22 African countries to participate in the 1970 round of the population censuses. For many of these countries, this was their first ever census. The ACP established statistical infrastructures in many countries but since the subject-field was limited by the very nature of the data collection mechanism, the information generated from the population censuses only filled part of the data gaps in African countries.

2. In reviewing the technical and operational experience gained in the ACP, the Conference of African Statisticians at its eighth session in 1973 recommended that a household survey programme be investigated as a logical sequel to the census programme. It recommended that the technical and practical aspects of household surveys should be examined by a Working Group on Methodology, Organization and Content of Household Surveys in September 1974. In view of the inter-disciplinary nature of the proposed survey programme, the concerned specialised agencies including FAO, ILO, UNESCO and WHO participated in the Working Group.

1974 Working Group on Methodology, Organization and
Content of Household Surveys

3. The Working Group reviewed previous African household surveys with respect to methodology, co-ordination and coverage. The Group "discussed briefly the multi-purpose and/or multi-subject approach in household surveys and examined the extent of its use in past surveys by countries of the region. It was noted that even in uni-subject surveys data on supplementary subject matter fields were often collected in order to provide cross-classifying variables. The so-called multi-purpose and/or multi-subject approach or programme could be implemented in a number of ways. Such a programme could be carried out through (i) the conduct of a number of single-subject surveys at one and the same time, for instance a budget-consumption survey, a live-stock survey, demographic survey, etc., with each group of surveyed households constituting a sub-sample of a much larger master sample, or (ii) a single survey with a common sample of households, in which data on a number of subjects would be collected in the same operation, or (iii) the conduct of multi-round single-subject surveys over a number of years, with the survey at each particular round being devoted to a major subject only."/

4. In discussing the basic subject-fields for household surveys, one of the working papers for the meeting identified the following:

- Demographic characteristics
- Health
- Food consumption and nutrition
- Housing conditions and facilities
- Educational characteristics and cultural activities
- Employment
- Economic level of the household.

It was the consensus of the Group that "African countries could develop household data collection systems, covering all essential topics, in continuing survey cycles which could each be accommodated within four-year periods of investigation. On this basis, the prospects for long-term household survey programmes in Africa were considered to be viable."

5. The essential requirements for development of a permanent field survey organization were also discussed. These were identified as follows: design of a programme of household surveys, assessment of ultimate size and structure

1/ Report of the Working Group on Methodology, Organization and Content of Household Surveys, Addis Ababa, 2-10 September 1974 E/CN.14/SM/20.

of the field organization, transport, data processing arrangements and adequate budgetary provision. The Working Group recommended that "countries should build up survey capabilities of national coverage as quickly as possible, rather than to organize inquiries on a region-by-region basis. However, the size and composition of field organizations would depend on local resources and it was felt that, in some cases, regional branches of the statistical office would not be necessary."

6. In its examination of survey methodology and adaptations needed for multi-subject programmes, the Group considered the advantages of multi-phase sampling designs for multi-subject surveys and also the merits of self-weighting designs.

7. The Working Group finally considered the co-ordination of household surveys with other statistical activities and technical assistance and related activities. The preliminary estimate of the annual cost of an averaged sized survey organization was approximately US\$438,000.

Approval of AHSCP by Legislative Bodies of ECA

8. The Report of the Working Group was submitted to the ninth session of the Conference of African Statisticians held in Lomé in October 1975 which strongly endorsed the African Household Survey Capability Programme in view of its expected contribution to statistical development in the region.

9. It should be recalled that prior to the ninth session of the Conference of African Statisticians, the ECA Conference of Ministers at its third meeting in February 1975 had accorded high priority to multi-subject household surveys for the collection of integrated demographic, social and economic data. The programme was again strongly supported at the tenth session of the Conference of African Statisticians convened in Addis Ababa in October 1977.

10. Meanwhile the United Nations Statistical Commission at its nineteenth session fully supported the concept of a household survey capability programme in the African region and stressed the need to adapt the programme to meet the needs of other developing regions. Finally, the ECOSOC resolution 2055(LXII) of May 1977 drew the attention of developing countries to the National Household Survey Capability Programme in the development of statistical infrastructures to secure integrated statistics needed for social and economic development planning and national policy making.

Regional Component of AHSCP

11. The importance of the programme having been determined beyond question, the only problem remaining was the strategy for mobilising resources for its implementation. The ECA Statistics Division considered it more appropriate to initiate the preliminary phase of the programme through the regional component of the AHSCP which aimed at providing a small advisory nucleus consisting of two survey specialists with other specialists provided by the concerned UN specialised agencies together with supporting secretarial staff. It was considered more realistic to tackle the more broadly based funding (multi-lateral and bilateral) of individual country projects after this preliminary phase of the operation had been established. The immediate aim of the regional component of the AHSCP was therefore "to assist African

governments which had not already done so to set up permanent field survey organizations concerned primarily with the collection of data from households and to ensure that these data are analyzed in a manner suitable for the planning of development efforts and for measuring levels of living." 1/

12. There were delays in the recruitment of the survey specialists. But Dr. Myint Tin, former Director of Statistics, Burma a well-known sampling expert has assumed duty as the English-speaking survey expert. It is expected that the French-speaking survey expert will join shortly. In the meantime, Mr. Peter Wingfield-Digby has been engaged as a short-term consultant to assist in the implementation of the programme.

13. It should be noted that there has been considerable backstopping of survey activities in the region by the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Statistics Division and the Sampling Expert attached to the Regional Advisory Service in Demographic Statistics. It should also be noted that I.L.O. has also appointed Mr. A.C. Basu, a household survey specialist to be attached to the regional component of the AHS CP and it is expected that other specialised agencies will participate in this type of collaborative endeavour.

14. In the next few years, it is expected that the ECA component of the AHS CP will:

- (a) assist in the strengthening of permanent survey organizations in countries where these exist in one form or other;
- (b) help in the establishment of permanent field organizations in countries which have completed their population censuses and thus have the basic statistical infrastructures for the setting up of a survey capability but which have not yet established permanent field organizations;
- (c) assist in the development of core questionnaires which will serve as the integrating factor for data collected from the different rounds and special modules covering subjects such as income, consumption and expenditure, employment, health, and demographic characteristics for individual countries. These questionnaires will be widely disseminated as prototypes but not as model questionnaires to be followed without adaptation;
- (d) help in the preparation of corresponding tabulation and publication programmes together with an examination of the appropriate concepts, definitions and classifications;
- (e) render advisory services in survey organization, design, quality control, data processing, data analysis and report preparation and dissemination.

This work programme for the regional component of the AHS CP is rather extensive and is not all expected to be attempted in the initial phase of the programme. Additional staff will also be required for the implementation of the whole of the work programme.

Country Programmes

15. The next phase of the AHSCP, namely the mobilisation of resources for individual country programmes has already been tackled at a recent donors meeting and a report will be given in document E/CN.14/SM/30 on Technical and Financial Assistance. Meanwhile countries continue to carry out their household surveys. Below is a short country by country summary of surveys either undertaken in the recent past or on-going or planned in the context of the AHSCP:

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria A tentative household survey programme has been drawn up. The first stage deals with income, consumption and expenditure and data collected during the household listing could be used for demographic purposes. The second stage of the programme is likely to concentrate on labour force, health and education. The third stage will deal mainly with production and distribution. A demographic survey, including a detailed fertility investigation will constitute the fourth stage. The first stage enumeration has been completed.

Egypt There is a long tradition of household surveys. Most surveys appear to be organized on an ad hoc basis but prospects for development of an integrated programme would be good. There was a fertility survey in rural areas and a national demographic survey in 1974 and a household budget survey in 1975.

Libya A programme of surveys has been drawn up and includes an income and expenditure survey as well as a demographic survey.

Sudan An income, consumption and expenditure survey has been completed for 9 provinces of the north and the work in the remaining 3 provinces is nearing completion. A fertility survey has been completed in the north. Enumeration in the south was due to start in July 1979. The first two sampling stages are common to both surveys. The next population census is tentatively scheduled for 1982. A detailed household survey programme would be drawn up after that.

Tunisia A fertility survey has been completed. The results have not yet been published. The country has a long survey tradition and details would provide useful guidelines.

WEST AFRICA

- Benin** A fertility survey is planned as part of the World Fertility Survey.
- Ghana** A household budget survey was conducted in 1974. The results are expected to be published shortly. A fertility survey was conducted in 1978/79. A programme of household surveys will be drawn up after the next population census tentatively scheduled for March 1980.
- Ivory Coast** There is no current information on plans for economic and demographic surveys to be conducted in the near future. A fertility survey is planned as part of the World Fertility Survey.
- Liberia** An income, consumption and expenditure survey was completed in mid-1978 but the results have not been processed. A multi-round demographic survey is in progress and will last until mid-1980. The next priorities might be employment information, followed by household economic data. Agricultural statistics are dealt with by the subject ministry and there will be prospects for better co-ordination when a permanent field survey organization is established.
- Mali** Household economic and demographic surveys are planned but their implementation will depend on outside financing. It is also necessary to consider the development of an integrated household survey programme in the context of the existing permanent agricultural survey.
- Mauritania** A fertility survey is planned as part of the World Fertility Survey.
- Nigeria** The country has a long tradition of survey activity, originally based on continuing collection of agricultural and household economic data. Recent survey activities reached a peak around 1975 and appear to have been organized on an ad hoc basis but there is no detailed information. Arrangements for a longer-term survey programme may depend to some extent on decisions regarding the handling of future population censuses. A pilot of a household income, consumption and expenditure survey was undertaken in 1978/79 and the main survey is planned for 1979/80.
- Senegal** There is no detailed information available but a fertility survey is currently in progress. The country has the capacity to develop an ongoing survey programme but there are so far no definite plans.

Sierra Leone

A tentative survey programme has been drawn up, as follows:

- 1st round: Consumer expenditure; income and expenditure, household trade; and wage rates of a few important categories of rural labour.
- 2nd round: Household non-registered transport; housing conditions; labour force, employment and unemployment.
- 3rd round: Consumer expenditures; costs of agricultural production; demographic survey; professions and services.
- 4th round: Household manufacture; an enquiry into labour class households - income, expenditure, working conditions, indebtedness.

Part of the first round of this 4-year cycle of surveys, namely a household income, consumption and expenditure survey has been completed. The labour force survey in the second round should now be almost complete.

CENTRAL AFRICA

Gabon

The tentative future survey programme is as follows:

- 1981 Demographic Survey
- 1982 Household Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey
- 1983 Survey on Employment with Special Module on Professional Training
- 1984 Housing Survey
- 1985 Agricultural Census

Cameroon

Plans are going ahead for an income, consumption and expenditure survey which will follow the 1978 fertility survey in 1979 with special modules on food consumption and nutrition. The tentative outline of the survey programme then proceeds as follows:

- 1980 Survey on employment, including modules on participation of women in development and activities in the informal sector
- 1981 (a) Health and environmental survey, with a special module on the handicapped
(b) Demographic and housing survey
- 1982 Survey of social perspectives, with a special module on rural development
- 1983 Census of agriculture
- 1984 Survey of income, consumption and expenditure, including modules on food consumption and nutrition.

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cameroon (cont'd) 1985 Survey on employment
 1986. Population and housing censuses
 1987 Health survey
 Arrangements along these lines amount to a ten-year cycle for censuses and a more flexible five-year cycle for surveys.

Central African Empire

A household income, consumption and expenditure survey was conducted almost concurrently with the recent population census.

EAST AFRICA

Ethiopia No survey programme yet exists but there is a very active food and nutrition surveillance operation which could eventually develop as a multi-purpose data collection network.

Kenya

The National Integrated Sample Survey Programme (NISSP) has progressed through two rounds and Kenya holds a leading position in survey development. The first round dealt with household budget, labour and agricultural activities, plus supporting inquiries on transport, marketing, etc. Kenya is also participating in WFS. The important point of note in the Kenya operation is the use of a standard (but expanding) national sample which enables the organization of data collection in a flexible manner. The work differs from that of other African countries due to the emergence of something resembling a "core survey" to which other inquiries can be attached as necessary; there is less emphasis on the investigation of distinct selected topics in successive survey rounds. Other points of interest are the incorporation of agricultural statistics and the development of this work on the basis of food and nutrition surveillance.

Madagascar.

A household income, consumption and expenditure survey in the seven big towns, viz. Antananarivo, Antsirabe, Tamatave, Diego-Suares, Majunga, Fianarantsoa and Tuléar, was undertaken in 1977-1978 and provisional reports have since been published.

Somalia

There are plans for demographic and economic surveys. Preparations are underway for the demographic survey.

Tanzania

An income, consumption and expenditure survey was carried out in 1976/77 but processing of the results has been delayed. There are plans for other surveys following last year's UNFPA Population Needs Assessment Mission. These include fertility and labour force surveys.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Botswana

Migration and income distribution surveys are underway.

A rural income distribution survey was completed in 1975. The areas covered were those parts of Botswana which excluded Francistown, Gaborone, Lobatse, Orapa and Selebi-Pikwe. The tentative future programme is as follows:

1978/79 National migration study
Household expenditure survey
Agricultural survey

1979/80 Mortality, morbidity and fertility survey
Agricultural survey
Rural Income Distribution Survey (incorporating in-kind income and own-consumption, nutrition)

1980/81 Agricultural survey
Rural Income Distribution Survey (incorporating in-kind income and own-consumption, nutrition)

1981/82 Population and housing census
Agricultural census

1982/83 Mortality, fertility, family planning
Social perspectives

1983/84 Income, consumption and expenditure
(incorporating nutrition)

1984/85 Labour force and migration

1985/86 Mortality, fertility, family planning

1986/87 Inter-censal base-line agricultural survey

1987/88 Labour force and migration.

A core questionnaire incorporating basic demographic, migration, labour force, income, expenditure, assets, health, etc. questions would be introduced in, say, 1979/80 or 1980/81.

The surveys referred to above would be baseline studies to measure absolute levels, whilst in other years changes only would be established. The baseline surveys would be added as separate modules to the continuous core questionnaire. The baseline surveys would be carried out as follows:

- 3-yearly Mortality, fertility, family planning/
labour force and migration.
- 5-yearly Income, consumption and expenditure/
nutrition/agricultural (inter-censal)
survey.
- 6-yearly Social perspectives -attitudes to
policies, etc.

- Botswana (cont'd)** The agricultural survey would be incorporated with the core questionnaire to be conducted continuously.
- Lesotho** Has participated in WFS. There are plans to carry out an integrated multi-round household survey programme with emphasis on demographic topics and labour force.
- Swaziland** No large scale household surveys have been conducted since the population census of 1976 but a pilot survey was recently carried out in preparation for a proposed family expenditure survey.
- Zambia** Survey on inter-relationships among infant and childhood mortality, socio-economic factors and fertility in selected areas.

Conclusion

16. The status report on household surveys in Africa given above gives only a partial picture, since ECA does not have up-to-date information on all countries in the region. However, even this fragmentary information is sufficient to indicate the level of activity in the field of household surveys which is either taking, or planned to take, place in the region. Its future development would depend on the joint efforts of the countries themselves in deciding on what priorities to place on multi-subject household surveys in the context of their overall planning strategy, the technical backstopping that ECA is able to provide to individual country projects and the financial assistance, both multilateral and bilateral, which can be mobilized to assist countries.