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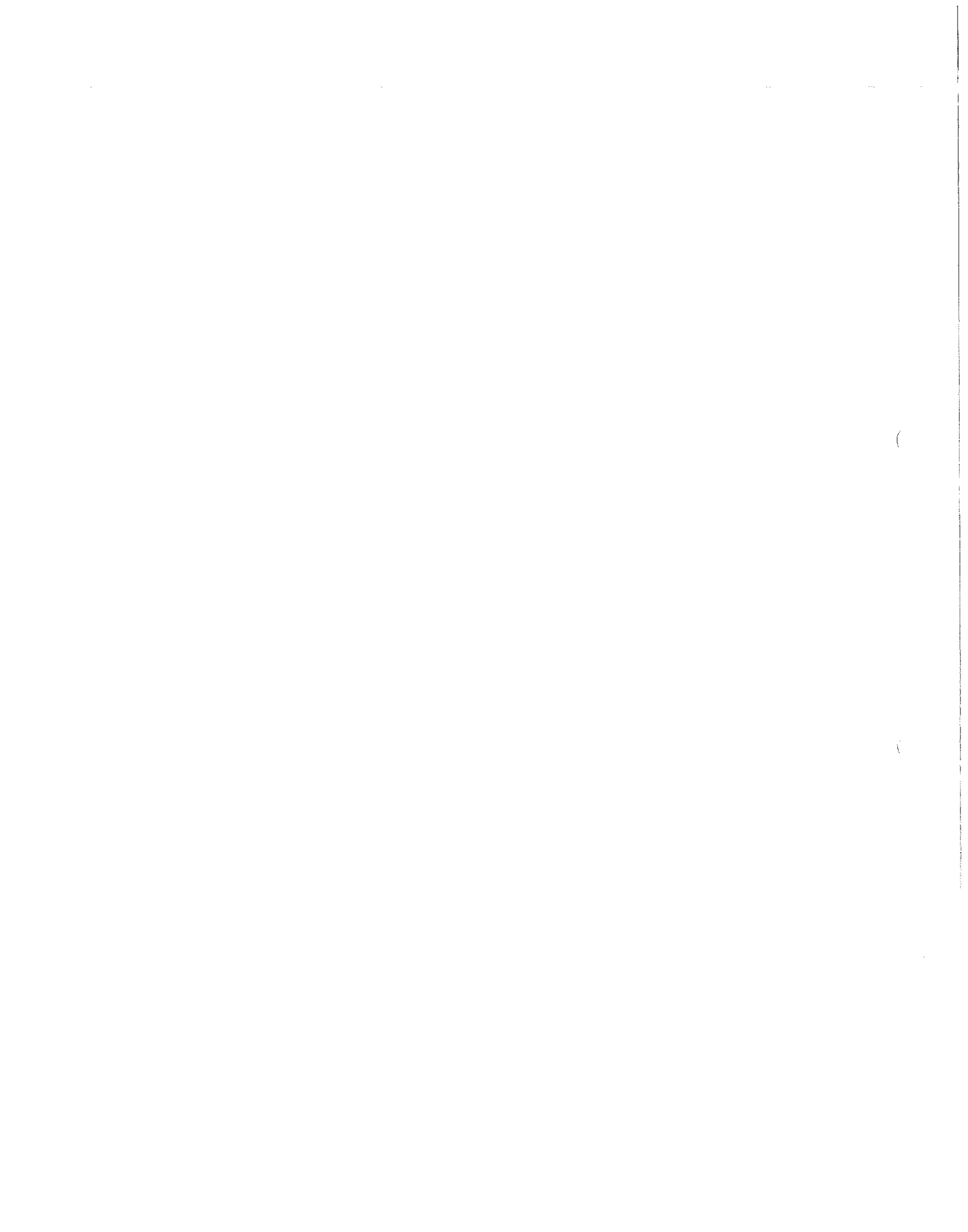
COORDINATION OF ON-GOING STATISTICAL PROGRAMMES*

16 (a) POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUSES

16 (b) CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS

Progress reports of the United Nations Statistical Office

* The other sub-items of agenda item 16 are covered by other documents.



16 (a) Population and housing censuses

1. The Office has completed a methodological study of national concepts of households and families used by countries in 1980 and earlier censuses with a view to assess the present scope and comparability of available household statistics. The results of this study will be presented as a special article in the Demographic Yearbook 1987 which will also contain several tabulations on this topic.

2. With UNFPA support, the Office is preparing two handbooks: one is on census data processing using microcomputers and software packages and the other is on methods for the development of national population census data bases on microcomputers. The two reports are intended to assist countries take great advantage of emerging new technologies for data processing, publication and timely dissemination of data.

3. Further, the Office is, in collaboration with ILO, planning a series of workshops to promote implementation of new standards for measurement of the economically active population and the revised ISIC and ISCO that are now available.

4. In addition to the above-mentioned workshops, substantive support is provided to technical co-operation projects concerning the 1990 round of population and housing censuses on behalf of the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation and Development. At present, the technical

co-operation projects in demographic statistics/censuses that are funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) are in progress in approximately 100 developing countries. The support includes, inter alia, study tours, fellowships, participation in census training activities and technical advisory service at various stages of census operation. Another component of support relates to census data processing and dissemination of the results and includes the provision of expert services and the procurement of supplies and equipment including computer hardware and software for effective implementation of the 1990 censuses.

16 (b) Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

1. Civil registration and vital statistics are the principal sources for current demographic statistics in most countries. The demand for current statistics has substantially increased in the context of the growing need for monitoring population trends at national and sub-national levels and formulation of health programmes and policies.
2. In the context, the United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics (IIVRS) have been working together in the past two years to find new strategies to accelerate the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems. Three informal consultation meetings were held between March and August 1988 in New York and Washington, which led to the formulation of an International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of the Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems .
3. The programme will assist countries by (1) providing guidelines for the self-assessment of the existing civil registration and vital statistics system; (2) providing guidance for formulating a national plan of action; (3) disseminating and assisting in the preparation of handbooks and manuals for use by countries; (4) operating a clearing house of information on vital statistics/civil registration systems which will be responsive to needs of countries; (5) providing technical advice to countries at various stages of development; (6) supporting training activities to increase the skills of

nationals; (7) assist countries in obtaining other necessary technical co-operation for proposed activities and projects; and (8) helping to rally national support of national organizations which are the potential beneficiaries of sound vital statistics/civil registration systems.

4. A main feature of this programme is that it shifts the emphasis from pilot studies and demonstration area approaches towards solving specific problems existing in civil registration and vital statistics systems, as revealed by the self-assessment of these systems. Another feature of this programme is that it will take into account the stage of development of the civil registration and vital statistics systems in a country and give priority at the initial stages for technical and financial assistance to countries with great possibilities for quick improvement.

5. This programme is conceived as a joint initiative of international agencies, regional bodies and non-governmental organizations. The emphasis will be on national determination of goals and strategies for improvements of its vital statistics and civil registration systems. The programme will be implemented, upon the availability of extra-budgetary resources, in the coming decade. It is envisioned that the Statistical Office of the United Nations in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and other participating agencies, will act as the focal point in promoting the strategy for accelerating developments in these systems.