

ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES
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IMPROVEMENT OF COORDINATION TOOLS

REVIEW THE ACC PROGRAMME CLASSIFICATION FOR STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES IN TERMS OF ITS APPLICABILITY FOR COORDINATION REPORTS OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES

Note by UNSTAT

1. The Independent Review Group considered that a well developed classification of statistical subjects would enable programmes of work of different agencies to be described in a common framework, which would allow the identification of gaps and overlaps and therefore act as a tool of coordination (E/CN.3/1993/21, para, 46). The Statistical Commission subsequently endorsed the request of the Working Group that "the Statistical Division and the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities submit inter-agency planning reports on a subject basis, where feasible, to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session." (E/CN.3/1993/20, para, 43).
2. The ACC Subcommittee had initially developed a statistical subject classification for the presentation of statistical series included in agency publications. This classification was used in the Directory of International Statistics (1975 and 1982). The Subcommittee also provided recommendations in the development of the statistics section of the ACC Programme Classification. The recommendations of the Subcommittee were accepted and are part of the current ACC Programme classification developed during 1991 (see annex 1). That classification was used by UNSTAT in presenting two reports to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-seventh session, namely the "Overall review of the statistical work of the international organization" (E/CN.3/1993/22) and "Plans for the international organizations in the area of statistics" (E/CN.3/1993/23). It was also used in presenting the most recent issue of the "Inventory of statistical data-collection activities" (E/CN.3/AC.1/1993/R.6).
3. In preparing the above reports some decisions had to be made about where to place some activities within the classification and how to reflect broad general statements made by organizations about their activities. Decisions were made on a pragmatic basis as follows for the first two reports above:

- (a) In general, each item of information was placed in one item of the classification only. Some exceptions were made to improve clarity. For example, some ILO items were placed in labour and population, labour and income and labour and prices. Environmental accounts information was placed under national accounts and environment. Activities relating to measurement of women's contribution were placed under women and national accounts. Some FAO activities were placed under agriculture and trade.
- (b) Multi-subject items such as statistical yearbooks were placed under "Other statistics, n.e.c."
- (c) All seminars, workshops, household surveys, and training and technical cooperation missions were placed under "Statistical capacity-building and training", except where it was clear that a seminar or workshop was aimed at methodological development, in which case it was placed under the subject-matter heading. All technical cooperation activities were placed under "Statistical capacity-building and training" and not under the particular subject-matter. Meetings of regional conferences of statisticians, governing statistical bodies of specialized agencies and other similar meetings were also included under "Statistical capacity-building and training".
- (d) Outputs and activities related to individual commodities, covering mixed data such as trade, production, prices and consumption, were placed under "Other economic statistics".
- (e) Population and housing censuses were placed under "Population".

4. Three special groupings were created for the functional areas of "Classifications", "Technological developments and databases" and "Coordination". This was done generally by duplicating notable information from the subject-matter entries, to give an indication of the activities carried out in those areas of work that are known to be of interest to members of the Subcommittee and the Commission.

5. For the third report, the "Inventory", the following decisions regarding treatment of entries were made:

- (a) If the subject of the data-collection fell under more than one classification heading it was placed under each one of them. The description of the data-collection activity was placed under the first classification heading. For entries under subsequent

headings, the description was cross-referenced to the first heading;

- (b) Requests for data for multi-subject items, such as statistical yearbooks and bulletins of statistics, were placed under one of the general headings of the classification, for example, "Demographic, social and economic statistics", "Demographic and social statistics" or "Economic statistics", depending on the coverage of subjects in the questionnaire.

6. These kinds of application difficulties do not really reflect deficiencies in the classification but simply problems in fitting descriptions of complex work into the framework of a classification. These kinds of problems would be expected to exist in any alternative classification as well.

7. Overall experience with the classification in presenting the three reports, and the feedback so far from users of the reports, suggest that the classification adequately serves the purpose of providing a common framework for reporting, for identifying gaps and overlaps and for promoting coordination; no change is suggested at this time; the classification could be looked at again after another round of its application to various reports.

8. A brief comparison of the ACC Programme Classification and the classification used by ECE in CES/R.5 "Draft programmes of international statistical work in the ECE region 1994/95 and 1995/96: an integrated presentation" has been done for information purposes (See annex II).

Annex I

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION PROGRAMME CLASSIFICATION
FOR STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES 1/

- 030. General Statistics
- 031. Demographic and social statistics
 - 1. Social Services
 - 2. Population
 - 3. Housing
 - 4. Labour
 - 5. Education
 - 6. Culture and mass communication
 - 7. Health
 - 8. Distribution of income and consumption
 - 9. Social Security
 - 10. Poverty monitoring
 - 11. Role of women
 - 12. Other social, demographic and related statistics
- 031. Economic statistics
 - 1. National accounts
 - 2. Agriculture
 - 3. Forestry and fishery
 - 4. Industry
 - 5. Energy
 - 6. Services
 - 7. Construction
 - 8. Trade
 - 9. Transport
 - 10. Storage
 - 11. Communication and tourism
 - 12. Money and banking, interest rates and other private finance, public sector finance, balance of payments and external debt, exchange rates and capital flows.
 - 13. Prices, including the International Comparison Programme
 - 14. Industrial Property
 - 15. Science and technology
 - 16. Other economic statistics
- 033. Other statistics
 - 1. Environment
 - 2. Meteorological statistics
 - 3. Statistical capacity-building and training
 - 4. Other statistics, n.e.c.

1/ The items above are from the ACC Programme Classification. The sub-items reflect the footnote material in the classification.

Annex II

1. A brief comparison of the ACC Programme Classification and the classification used by ECE in CES/R.5 "Draft programmes of international statistical work in the ECE region 1994/95 and 1995/96: an integrated presentation" has been done. Details are as follows:

<u>ECE Classification</u>	<u>ACC Programme Classification</u>
6 major headings	3 major headings
43 detailed headings	32 detailed headings
14 headings for economic statistics	16 headings for economic statistics
13 headings for social and demographic	12 headings for social and demographic
3 headings for environment	1 heading for environment
_____	2 headings for other fields of statistics
13 headings for "functional" activities	1 heading for functional activities (supplemented by 3 additional functional headings when used by UNSTAT to present reports

2. The detail for subject matter is similar in both classifications. The major difference is in the extended coverage of "functional activities" in the ECE classification.
