United Nations Regional Seminar on Census Data Dissemination and Spatial Analysis

Santiago, Chile, 31 May-3 June 2011

Annotated Agenda

Session 1 – Opening remarks

The seminar will commence with opening remarks delivered by UNSD and CELADE.

Session 2 – The 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses

Through the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, UNSD aims to improve statistical capacity to effectively conduct population and housing censuses. UNSD works towards this objective through the promotion of methodological guidelines and standards. It also facilitates the exchange of national experience and know-how in order to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of census operations. Session 2 will provide an overview of the objectives of the 2010 World Programme and some of its major activities.

Session 3 – Regional Perspective on Census Data Dissemination

The exchange of experience and know-how at the national, regional and international levels can contribute towards the development of the global statistical system. Towards this purpose, Session 3 provides opportunity for the ECLAC region to share its experiences and to highlight common challenges faced in census operations, especially with regard to the dissemination and utilization of census data.

Session 4 – Strategies for Census Data Dissemination

A census is not considered complete until the information collected is made available to users in the form suited to their needs—a dissemination strategy is critical to attain that objective. Good practice in census management requires that the dissemination strategy should be integrated into the overall planning and management of census operations. The development of a schedule of census outputs that ensures timeliness and accuracy is the cornerstone of a dissemination strategy. Good practice in census management also requires that the overall dissemination strategy—and in particular the plan for producing different census outputs—should be guided by consultation with users and stakeholders. Census products and services developed in a manner that gives consideration for the needs and requirements of data users permit wider dissemination and utilization. Session 4 will discuss the relevance of a dissemination strategy for the success of

a census operation and some of the main considerations that should go into the development of such a strategy.

Session 5 – Identification of and consultations with census data users

User consultation is considered a major factor in the development of a dissemination strategy, especially in terms of the development of census products and services. Session 5 will deal with the user consultation process which is critical to determine: the topics which are suitable for inclusion in the census; and the demand for potential census products and services.

Session 6 – Determination of the scope and form of census data dissemination

After the conclusion of the user consultation process—which is expected to lead to a fuller understanding of the requirements of census data users—the statistical organization will have to make a series of decisions regarding the data it will disseminate, the format and media of dissemination, and the types of services it will provide in support of dissemination. Consideration may also be given to quality of data, user-friendliness of media, and client support. Session 6 will discuss some of the main determinations that may be made to provide an optimal mix of census products and services to a broad range of users.

Session 7 – Data confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important concern in the dissemination of census data. Census laws and other statistical legislations usually contain confidentiality rules to avoid the disclosure of identifiable personal or household information. Some measures to protect confidentiality include: anonymization; requiring data protection and privacy contracts; and allowing access to microdata only in a secure and controlled environment and to specific groups of users or for specific purposes (academic, research and policy-making). Session 7 will deal with the importance of data confidentiality in the dissemination of census data.

Session 8 – Metadata in Census Data Dissemination

Metadata inform users about the content, quality and condition of data. Metadata provide guidance on proper usage and interpretation of data and are instrumental in transforming data into meaningful information. Metadata also promote transparency in the use of data. Session 8 will offer opportunity to share national experiences on the role of metadata in the dissemination, and use of, census data.

Session 9 – Use of technological tools in the dissemination of census data

An effective dissemination strategy takes advantage of the possibilities offered by new and existing technologies. With the rapid advancement of technology, data users have an increasing interest in a broad range of census products and services. There is a growing need for interactive tools and web based technologies for tabulating, visualizing and mapping to support the analysis, modelling and presentation of census data. As technological developments advance rapidly, statistical organizations must be prepared to respond to user expectations. Session 9 is aimed at

sharing national practices and experiences in the use of emerging technological tools and innovative approaches in the dissemination of census data.

Session 10 – Use of GIS, web-based mapping and spatial analysis

Presently, geographic information systems (GIS) are at the cutting edge of technologies being harnessed to improve census operations, from the mapping stage to the later stage of dissemination. GIS are increasingly being used to support the analysis, modelling and presentation of spatially referenced data. Where it is feasible, statistical organizations are developing and implementing GIS systems, and the number of countries disseminating spatially referenced data and offering census products containing spatial analysis is growing. Session 10 will offer the opportunity to share national practices and experiences in the use of GIS and web-based mapping tools in the analysis and dissemination of census data.

Session 11 – Software packages for dissemination of census data

Session 11 will present an overview of three software applications—CSPro, Redatam and CensusInfo. The session will present an overview of the respective features of the software packages and provide a forum to share country experiences on their use, including for disseminating census data.

Session 12 – Exploitation and analysis of census data

A population and housing census provides vital information and insights on the trends and dynamics that affect a society which can be valuable for policy-making and decision-making by government, business and community. In order to extract the fullest possible information, the census results have to be thoroughly analyzed. The objective of Session 12 is to share national practices and experiences in the analysis of census data with a view to ensuring full utilisation of census results and to providing evidence-based information for policy-making and decision-making.

Session 13 – Consideration of recommendations of the seminar for the effective dissemination and utilization of census data

The regional seminar is expected to help in identifying good practices and lessons learned in the dissemination and use of census data. The ideas generated by the discussion and the recommendations made by participants will contribute towards the preparation of an expert group meeting and the drafting of a technical report on the same topic.

Session 14 – Closing

The seminar will conclude with closing remarks by UNSD and CELADE.