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Current state of social statistics and institutional infrastructure to coordinate
the national system of statistics and geographical information in Mexico *

by

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National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics

Introduction

The National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI in Spanish) is an organism of the Federal Government, responsible for the coordination of the National System of Statistics and Geographical Information (NSSGI).

From the organizational point of view, it counts with the following General Directorates: Statistics; National Accounts, Socioeconomic Studies and Prices; Geography; and Informatics. Additionally, the Institute has 10 Regional Directorates and 32 State Coordinators, distributed through all the country.

The following remarks refer to the work done by INEGI in the field of social statistics:

Objectives of Social and Demographic Statistics

To assure the existence and availability of socio-demographic statistics to give an informative base which allows:

- The planning, programming, execution and evaluation of social policies that support the benefits of all the Mexican population, specially of those who live in higher disadvantage.
- Assuring that economic growth and development becomes a sustainable social and human development.

1. The current state of social statistics

1.1 2000 Census of Population and Housing

On March 2000, Mexico conducted its XII Census of Population and Housing. This is the main benchmark to design household surveys for collecting some population characteristics and giving a framework to compile data from administrative registers.

This Census took place for two weeks and for the first time, a mixed technique was used: the universal enumeration and a survey by sampling for special topics. In this survey we obtained very useful data about internal and international migration; school attendance and reasons of non-attendance; access to public health services; disabilities; ethnic identity; home disposable waste; house antiquity and its durable goods (stoves, refrigerators, personal computers, etc.). The preliminary results of the Census were obtained only 15 weeks after the period of data collection.

Some of the main results of this Census are the data prepared by each state, municipality and locality. This work is available in printed documents, digital media and Internet. Georeferenced census data information is also available for each locality up to 2,500 inhabitants. In addition, the population projections were made for until year 2025, and several organizations of the public and academic sectors had made an intensive use of this information.

We have made intensive use of the census data. We will prepare studies on specific topics or population like childhood, youth, old age, ethnic groups, professionals, women and men. In the past, we used to prepare such kind of studies together with academic institutions. We can also point out that INEGI has been aware of gender issues since 10 years ago, with different shades and depths.

2000 Census evaluation

Last year the elaboration of the memory and an evaluation of the complete census process began. These will serve as a base to design and plan the future collection of the 2005 Population Count Survey and the 2010 Census.

The preliminary analysis shows that there were some problems on the data validation process; even though, it does not change the composition and magnitude of the collected phenomena, it incites to review the implemented methodology.

In addition, there is the need to enforce the theoretical and methodological aspects.

Another derived point is the strengthening of the logistic and operative activities as a consequence of the large personal experience of each Regional Directorate.

Another conclusion obtained from the analysis refers to data processing and result exploitation. It is necessary to decentralize the exploitation and product generation in order to be able to respond to special and regional requirements from the users with the best possible opportunity.

1.2 Household surveys

INEGI regularly collects four household surveys: the National Employment Survey, the Urban Employment National Survey, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey and the National Population Dynamics Survey; in addition, we have collected time use surveys and another one about family violence.

Integrated household surveys system

We are working on an Integrated Survey on Households as a master sample and modular approach to conduct household surveys.

Until now, household surveys have been collected in an isolated way; using a big amount of financial resources and not paying much attention to real demands on coverage, issues or frequency, for national planning or public policies. For this reason we have to design an integrated household survey.

1.3 Administrative records

On this theme, statistics about births, deaths, fetal deaths, matrimonies and divorces were elaborated. Additionally, statistics are compiled for health, suicides, justice, labor relationships and culture.

In this field, the future work includes the following:

- Inside the framework of National System of Statistical Information, the elaboration of an inventory which includes all the records with possibilities of full use and exploitation
- Fortifying the inter-institutional agreements in order to adapt the administrative records according to the needs of information.
- Strengthening the statistics evaluation process.
- Supporting with information technologies developed information systems so as to satisfy the needs of users.

2. Proposed strategies and approaches

Coordination of the National System of Statistics and Geographical Information:

Mexico, like many other countries of the world, must attend the new and wider demands of national and international information. For this reason, INEGI is getting itself transformed and is promoting the development of the National System of Statistics and Geographical Information. INEGI, based on the Law of Statistical and Geographical Information, assumes its role of leading and coordinating the institution of the NSSGI and promotes the creation and the active participation of the statistical and the geographical information units of the federal public sector and of the state governments. With these actions INEGI impels the development of the sectorial and regional information systems and at the same time the development of NSSGI.

On February of the year 2003, the Consultative Technical Committee of Statistics and the Consultative Technical Committee of Geographical Information were created. One of the first activities of these Committees is the specialized discussion of the projects of the National Program of Statistical Development and the National Program of Geographical Information Development, which have been prepared as a result of a process of internal and external discussion. We also work on the creation of Sectorial Committees and Regional Committees. These are participative instances that join the main producers and users of information and INEGI has the role of technical secretary. Such committees have the purpose of impelling the development of the statistical and geographical information, as well as the fulfillment of the standards and methodologies of the integration of the NSSGI.

Nowadays, the Sectorial Technical Committee of Statistics of Labor and Social Security is in action. The Secretariat of Labor is the president, INEGI is the technical secretary of

standards and the Mexican Institute of Social Security and the Institute of Social Security and Services for the State Workers are the vocals and there is the possibility of organizing task force groups. In the same way, the Sectorial Technical Committee of Population, another of Health and the corresponding one to Education are all in process of creation.

The Technical committees, which are also instances of communication between producers and users, are key elements of the development of institutional capacity.

In addition, the commitment of the INEGI is to extend and to facilitate the access of data in user-friendly forms through information and communication technologies, so as to give a real support to the development of the statistical culture.

3. Challenges of social statistics in Mexico

To develop a system of integrated household surveys.

To make the generation of information process clear by making the data validation criteria and the implemented methodological procedures available in an explicit, accessible or approachable way and publishing it to the users.

To harmonize the methodological and conceptual framework in the whole National System of Statistics Information.

To improve and extend the exploitation of the administrative records.

To perform a diagnosis update of the needs of information and state priorities on urgent issues such as violence, disability, etc.

To improve the use of developed technology in elaborating and designing databases, indicator systems, specialized publications and massive disclosure.

To empower and train users to handle the information directly (data warehouse).

To incorporate institutions and dependencies in the National System of Information as producer units.