STATISTICAL COMMISSION
Fifth session - 8 May 1950
Item 6 (d) of the provisional agenda

POPULATION COMMISSION
Fifth session - 22 May 1950
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

SUGGESTION OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN REGARD TO THE TABULATION OF DATA ON URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION IN POPULATION CENSUSES

Memorandum submitted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Urban and Rural Population

At its fourth session, the Population Commission suggested that, in population censuses to be taken in or about 1950, the population be classified by size of agglomeration or cluster, cross-classified by age and sex. Ten size categories were proposed, but it was recognized that for the cross-classifications by age and sex, some countries might find it necessary to combine size classes in order to simplify the tabulations. For such cases, it was suggested that at least the distinction between places of 10,000 or more and those with less than 10,000 inhabitants be maintained (E/1313, Annex 2, paragraphs 46-49).

The combination of all size categories above 10,000 appears to be a reasonably satisfactory one from the point of view of urban analysis. However, the combination of all size categories below 10,000 raises certain difficulties from the point of view of rural analysis, since agglomerations of several thousand up to 10,000 often possess definitely "urban" characteristics.

It is therefore suggested that, where combinations of categories have to be made, at least the following distinctions be maintained:

(a) Population in places of 10,000 or more inhabitants;
(b) Population in places of 2,000 to 10,000 inhabitants;
(c) Population in places of less than 2,000 inhabitants.