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ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION, ITS
PROSPECTS, AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

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I. PRESENT DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF CHANGE^{1/}

Population trends (1950-1970)

1. From the standpoint of the demographic situation, Latin America is in an intermediate position between the most developed and the least developed regions of the world, which in any case it also occupies according to the indicators of the main economic and social development dimensions.

2. From 1950 to 1975 the population grew more rapidly in Latin America than in any other region. It doubled in only 25 years, while the world population increased by less than 60 per cent and that of the most developed regions by a little over 30 per cent. The regions's total fertility rate, which was 5.3 between 1970 and 1975, was significantly lower than that of other developing regions such as Africa and Southern Asia (6.3 and 6.0, respectively), but it was still more than twice the rate of the most developed regions.

3. For the region as a whole, life expectancy at birth increased from about 52.3 years in the period 1950-1955 to 61.5 years in 1970-1975, and even more rapidly in the first 10 years of the period than in the second. Whereas in 1950-1955 there were 12 countries with a life expectancy of less than 52 years and only two (Argentina and Uruguay) in which the index was over 60, the change in the situation was such that at the end of the period there were already 15 countries with a life expectancy of 60 years and only two (Bolivia and Haiti) where it had not yet reached 52. In spite of the general drop in mortality, there are a good many countries where the rate is as yet very high (Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Peru, as well as Bolivia and Haiti) and others where there is still an appreciable margin for their life expectancy to increase.

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^{1/} For a detailed analysis of the subject, see CEPAL, América Latina. Situación demográfica alrededor de 1973 y perspectivas para el año 2000, (ST/CEPAL/Conf.54/L.2), March 1975.

4. International migration played a relatively unimportant part at the regional level. It was only in the first 10 years of the period that Latin America showed a positive migratory balance. The positive balances of extra regional migration were relatively important in Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela; moreover, there are clear indications that the migratory flows between countries of the region have been increasing and have significantly influenced the population growth in some countries, particularly in the border areas and big cities.

5. In terms of population density, Latin America recorded a considerable increase, i.e., from 8 inhabitants per km² in 1950 to 16 in 1975, but at the same time showed a very unequal distribution over the whole territory; in 1975 the population density varied widely from less than 4 inhabitants per km² in Guyana to 568 in Barbados. In most countries, however, including all those with extensive territories, the density was not more than 30 inhabitants per km². Within the countries themselves there is an even bigger variation in density between the various areas composing them. In the majority of cases, a high concentration of population is observable in a few high-density areas and a sparse scattering of population over a large part of the territory, which would seem to indicate that, on the whole, the concentrated distribution pattern did not vary greatly between 1950 and 1970.

6. This combination of characteristics of the spatial distribution pattern of the Latin American population suggests the advisability of examining more carefully the evolution of the urbanization process in Latin America, which has been particularly intensive compared with that of other developing regions.

7. The urban population^{2/} of Latin America, which was just over 40 million in 1950, increased to 142 million in 1975, i.e., from 25 to 45 per cent of the total population in those same years, in its turn absorbing 64 per cent of the region's total population growth.

8. The intensity of the process was a direct result of the differential growth of the urban and the rural population. In all the countries, the

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^{2/} Population in localities of 20,000 inhabitants and over.

former grew much more rapidly than the latter, and for the region as a whole the growth rate of the urban population was over three and a half times that of the rural population.

9. In 13 countries of Latin America the growth rate of the urban population was higher than 5 per cent (a rate which means that the population will double in less than 15 years); in only three of these countries -Argentina, Uruguay and Cuba- the urban growth was relatively slower (around 3 per cent or less). For its part, the growth rate of the urban population of the region as a whole shows a declining trend, and the same is true of the majority of the countries considered separately. These trends will probably continue in the future, except in some as yet unurbanized countries in which the growth is likely to accelerate. The rural population of Latin America, in contrast, grew at an average annual rate of 1.6 per cent between 1950 and 1975, showing a clearly declining trend.

10. In all the Latin American countries the cities of 100,000 inhabitants and over have been growing rapidly and an increasing proportion of the population has gradually concentrated there. In 1950 the proportion was over 20 per cent only in the four most urbanized countries (Argentina, Chile, Cuba and Uruguay); in 1975, on the other hand, 14 countries had already exceeded that percentage, and nine of them had reached very high figures.

11. Furthermore, the degree of concentration of the total population and of the urban population in the great metropolitan areas (of 1 million inhabitants and over) is very high, as borne out by the fact that the proportion of the region's total population living in those areas rose from 9.2 per cent in 1950 to over 22 per cent in 1975. In the same period the proportion of urban population in the great metropolitan areas increased from 18.6 to 36.6 per cent.

Prospects of demographic change

12. On the basis of the available information on the trends followed by the components of population growth in the various areas and countries of the region, which was analysed briefly in the preceding section, it may be affirmed that the growth rate of the total population reached its peak in the mid-1960s and is beginning to decline slowly. Nonetheless, the growth rate of the population of Latin America will remain above that of the world population.

13. According to the latest projections, it is expected that in the last quarter of the century the growth rate of the Latin American population will decrease more and more rapidly from about 2.7 per cent in 1970-1975 to less than 2.4 per cent by the end of the century. This trend would determine a relative population growth of 91 per cent between 1975 and the year 2000.

14. The decline in the growth rate does not mean that in the next 25 years no important changes are expected in the population dynamics and structure of the region as a whole, and particularly of individual countries. Population growth is the result of the trends pursued by the components of that process, and the structure of the population confers a certain inertia on those trends. The projections forecast a substantial drop in the mortality rate of all the countries; but the possible effect of this drop on the growth rate would be largely counteracted by the expected decline in the birth rate.

15. In order to determine the implications of the demographic prospects, it is necessary to analyse the process of demographic change, taking into consideration its various components (birth, mortality and migration), since the same rate may have very different meanings according to the levels of these components and the age structure of the population. All this has important implications for the demographic variables and is a basic element in the analysis of the interrelationships between population changes and economic and social development.

16. The projections assume that, for the region as a whole, the total fertility rate will drop from 5.3 in 1970-1975 to less than 4 in 1995-2000, or
/by over

by over 25 per cent, which means an acceleration of the rate of decrease in relation to the preceding period (1950-1975). This trend of the total fertility rate is reflected in a significant drop in the birth rate.

17. At first glance, those changes in fertility, though considerable, are not exceptional. Nevertheless, if the fertility decline hypothesis were to materialize, it would mean that between 1970 and the year 2000 about 100 million fewer children would be born in Latin America than if the total fertility rates of the various countries remained constant at the estimated level for 1965-1970. It is practically impossible for this last hypothesis to materialize in view of the stage of development reached by the region and the trends observed in the past. According to another hypothesis, which is considered to be the maximum limit and forecasts a slow decline in fertility, the number of births between 1970 and the year 2000 would be 50 million more than the number expected according to the hypothesis of a 25 per cent drop in the total fertility rate. It is important to note that the projection period (1970-2000) is too short to evaluate the full extent of the expected changes in fertility. Even supposing that the drop in fertility were arrested in the year 2000, the difference between the expected number of births according to these various hypotheses would continue to grow in every quinquennium as the cohorts of births affected by previous drops in fertility reached the reproduction age.

18. The hypotheses in CELADE's projections do not differ with respect to mortality trends, because the future evolution of mortality in the various countries can be estimated more accurately than the course followed by fertility. Like the other hypotheses, the projection assumes that life expectancy at birth will increase from 61.5 years in 1970-1975 to just over 70 in 1995-2000, continuing the trend observed in the past consisting of a slower and slower increase as higher levels are attained.

19. Up to 1970 and as a result, first, of the maintenance of high fertility levels and even a rise in these levels in some countries and, secondly, of the sharp drop in mortality, the age structure of the region's population, which was already young, became slightly younger. Since then the proportion

/of minors

of minors of 15 years of age has begun to decrease and is expected to drop at an increasingly rapid rate from 42 per cent in 1975 to less than 38 per cent in the year 2000.

20. The foregoing description of the prospects of demographic change in the region as a whole should be supplemented by an analysis of the variants which the future trends will probably present in different countries or groups of countries with very different demographic, economic and social characteristics:^{3/} i) countries at a fairly advanced stage of demographic transition, with relatively high levels of economic and social development (Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Cuba); ii) countries which have recently entered into a clearly defined stage of transition, i.e., the initiation of a drop in fertility, and occupy an intermediate position in the ordering of economic and social development dimensions (Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela and Panama); iii) the remaining countries, i.e., those which have not yet shown any significant decline in their fertility rates. Generally speaking, the countries in this group are the least developed in the region, except for two of them -Peru, and particularly Mexico- which in several respects show higher indexes than some countries of the two previous groups and which, in a classification according to level of development, should occupy a different position. This group may be divided into three sub-groups according to the mortality level reached in 1970-1975. The first would include Mexico, Paraguay, Ecuador, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic, all of which already have a life expectancy of over 57 years; the second would comprise Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru, where the index has reached 53 to 55 years; the third group would consist of Bolivia and Haiti, which have the highest mortality in the region, with a life expectancy of less than 49 years in the period indicated.

21. Taking the foregoing considerations into account, it is important to note the prospects of demographic change in the countries of the different groups.

/22. In the countries

^{3/} See CEPAL, Long-term trends and projections of Latin American economic development, E/CEPAL/1027, 3 March 1977.

22. In the countries of the first group, fertility is comparatively low but there is still an appreciable margin for it to decline among the less privileged social groups or classes. Life expectancy at birth is the highest in the region and could still increase, especially in these groups, but the mortality rate will drop slowly or may even increase, as in the case of Argentina, Uruguay and possibly Cuba, because the effect of the increased life expectancy at birth will be offset by the ageing of the population. As a result of these trends, the population will continue to grow increasingly slowly in all these countries. The expected fertility and mortality rates will mean the continued ageing of the population age structure. The proportion of persons aged 15 years will continue to diminish, that of persons of active age will remain at the present high levels or will even increase, according to the country, and that of persons aged over 65 years will pursue its rising trend. These countries have already reached high levels of urbanization and the process may be expected to continue increasingly slowly. The same may be said of the growth of the urban and rural population, which will be slower and slower. The rural population will probably diminish in absolute terms in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.

23. In the countries of the second group, composed of Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela and Panama, fertility began to decline more recently than in the first group of countries. Generally speaking, the declining trend should be intensified in the future and its effect on the population growth rate will probably not be compensated for by the fall in the mortality rate, which has already reached relatively low levels. As a result of these trends, the rate of natural population growth will decrease substantially in the future, but in the year 2000 it will probably still range between 2 and to 2.5 per cent, according to the country. If these forecast are fulfilled, by the year 2000 all these countries will have a considerably older age structure, but still much younger than those found in Argentina or Uruguay in 1975. The proportion of the population aged less than 15 years will fall far below 40 per cent; that of persons of active age will be about 60 per cent; and that of persons of over 65 years will increase slowly, probably by not more than 5 per cent.

/24. The degree

24. The degree of urbanization attained by these countries varies considerably, and will probably increase all the more rapidly the lower it is at present, so that by the year 2000 it will have reached levels comparable with or even higher than those reached by the first group of countries in 1975. The rate of growth of the urban population, which currently fluctuates around 5 per cent, according to the country, will continue to fall slowly. The growth rate of the rural population, which is currently under 1.5 per cent, will continue to drop and will probably be a negative rate in some countries before the year 2000 (it was already negative in Venezuela in 1970-1975).

25. Fertility in the third group of countries has not yet shown any significant decrease, so that there is greater uncertainty regarding their evolution in the future than in the case of the other two groups of countries. It would be only logical to expect that the decline will start first and more rapidly in those countries of the group which are at a more advanced stage of transition and economic and social development. If this happens, the decrease should take place earlier in the first sub-group and later in Bolivia and Haiti. There are many factors, however, whose evolution is difficult to predict and which could change this order, at least for some countries. One of the most important factors is the coverage and effectiveness which private and government family planning programmes are likely to have. In any case, the fertility rate of these countries by the year 2000 will probably be around that recorded by the second group at the present time (between 4 and 5). Mortality rates are still high, particularly in the second and third sub-groups where they will probably drop more rapidly than in the first. If these trends materialize, the rate of natural population growth will fall more rapidly in the countries of the first sub-group than in those of the second and third, but all these countries will still have rates of over 2.5 per cent annually by the year 2000. In view of the fact that the degree of urbanization is fairly low at present and the natural growth of the population will remain at a high level, it may be expected that the growth of the urban and rural population will be fairly rapid during the next few quinquennia in the great majority of these countries.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENT

The two great challenges of the demographic trends

26. The demographic trends and their changes are related in a great many ways to the level, rate and mode of development adopted by the country, either because their consequences determine the alternatives for government action or because the present and future trends are in their turn largely the effect of broader socio-economic processes.

27. With this short summary of present demographic trends and future prospects it is possible to identify two great consequences which cannot be changed in the medium term and which constitute two major challenges for the governments of the region. The first is the increase in the labour force. The rates of population growth in the past decades and the age structure of the population will lead to a growth rate of 3 per cent annually in the population of active age between now and the year 2000, so that it will rise from about 97 million in 1975 to some 252 million by the end of the century.

28. The magnitude of the task of providing productive employment for the population of active age stands out more clearly if it is considered that, according to tentative CEPAL estimates, if the region were to maintain a steady rate of economic growth of around 6 per cent annually and the patterns of economic and technological change remained the same total employment would probably grow by not more than 2.2 per cent annually from now to the year 2000. In other words, the historical and comparatively high rate of economic growth attained by the region would, according to the above estimates, be insufficient to prevent the region's characteristic under-utilization of labour from becoming even worse in the future. A parallel exercise carried out by CEPAL indicates, also tentatively, that with the prevailing patterns of economic and
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technological change, a sustained increase of 8 per cent annually in the product would be required to absorb the growth of the labour force and gradually reduce its present under-utilization.

29. Success in meeting this challenge in the medium term depends basically not only on whether satisfactory rates of growth and adequate levels of capital formation are achieved, but also on whether the style of development adopted will in some degree modify the existing patterns of economic and technological change in order to increase the countries' labour absorption capacity. Since the population that will reach active age in the next 15 years has already been born, the changes in fertility and the policies adopted to speed up its decline will only then begin to have some effect.

30. Accordingly, if the governments wish to meet the challenge of the growth of population of active age by also modifying the fertility rates, they should adopt policies in this respect as from now so that they will have some effect towards the end of the century.

31. The second major consequence of the demographic trends is the urban character which all the countries of the region will have between now and the year 2000. Whether they wish it or not, two-thirds or more of the population of the majority of these countries will by that time be living in cities, and even in the less urbanized countries there will be more urban than rural inhabitants, and their development could not but be considered within the urban societies. Another great challenge now facing the countries of the region is to regulate the process of urban concentration and metropolitanization in order to avoid or attenuate the problems of urban deterioration (insufficient services, congestion, pollution, etc.), and the concentration of resources required to solve them.

32. Any modification of the present trends towards urban concentration and metropolitanization depend on the changes occurring in migratory flows and on the rate of natural population growth of the big cities. In view of the close relationship existing between demographic trends and the characteristics of the countries' economic and social development, the modification

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of those trends will mainly depend on the course of the factors conditioning such development, including government policies.

Development and population dynamics

33. General considerations. Demographic trends have coincided with high rates of economic growth, but also with the maintenance and in many case the aggravation of problems which have hitherto been difficult to solve. In this respect, the following main problems should be mentioned:

i) The persistence of material living conditions determining situations of extreme poverty and affecting the lowest social strata with singular force, both in areas of rapid concentration and urban growth and in depressed rural areas;

ii) The lack of any sustained progress towards a socially and regionally more balanced distribution of income that would ensure better levels of living for those social groups and in those geographical areas whose economic and social progress tends to be somewhat precarious and short-lived compared with that attained by the more privileged groups and regions;

iii) The persistence and, in many cases, the accentuation of marked regional disequilibria within the countries themselves, a situation which intensifies the trends towards a concentration of economic and social activity in a small number of important urban centres, makes for the maintenance of conditions of cultural, social and economic backwardness among the population living in large areas of the national territory, and therefore creates serious obstacles to the achievement of any lasting results of regional development policies and plans;

iv) The inadequacies that have persisted in the various fields included in the social sector of the governments' policies, such as housing, education, health and social security, in which, despite the progress made by many

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countries of the region as regards the coverage of services and the amount of resources assigned for their provision, considerable gaps still exist between the needs -present and projected- and the means available to satisfy them;

v) Lastly, mention should be made too of the insufficient creation of jobs to provide the labour force with productive employment, a lack which seems to be aggravated both by the growth dynamics of the population of active age and by the increasing importance acquired by the introduction of intensive technologies in the use of capital particularly, though not exclusively, in the most dynamic sectors of the national economies.

34. For a full understanding of the demographic trends observed in the region, it is necessary to take into account their relationship with the characteristics of the region's economic and social development process. Generally speaking, the research carried out on the subject in the region leaves little room for doubt that the growth rate of the population and the stage in the process of demographic change reached by the countries are related to the level of development they have attained. What is accepted at a general level, however, is sometimes open to discussion when a more detailed examination is made of the factors affecting the various components of demographic growth, i.e., mortality and fertility. At the same time, it is now known that the direct relationship between the level of development and the stage of demographic change of the various countries hides the persistence and, in some cases, the accentuation of wide disparities in mortality and fertility, when comparing urban with rural areas, regions, and social groups in a country. An analysis of these disparities brings out the relationship between them and the as yet unresolved development problems in the region.

35. Development and mortality. Although there is no doubt that the progress made in health and medicine had a fundamental influence in reducing mortality levels in the countries of the region, research on this question has revealed that the disparities between the mortality levels of interior regions of the countries depend not only on differences in terms of the availability of health services, but also on the degree of literacy, per capita income,

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stages of industrialization and urbanization, availability of housing and their quality (existence of piped water, latrines, etc.).

36. In all the countries of the region, urban mortality is lower than rural mortality and life expectancy at birth tends to rise as the degree of urbanization increases. There are signs, however, that this trend is slowing down and that it may even be reversed before low levels of mortality are reached.

37. The changes recorded in the above trend are not independent from the great differences in life expectancy of various social groups. These differences are often hidden in the general level of mortality reached by the country or region in which the comparison has been made. Specifically as regards mortality in the first two years of life, recent CELADE studies have found that children whose mothers did not attend primary school are about three times more likely to die in the first two years than children whose mothers have had 10 years or more of formal education.

38. On the whole, the most recent studies on mortality lead to the conclusion that, independently of the level of development or mortality attained, the differences in mortality between social groups are more marked than the urban-rural differences or those between regions within a country. At the same time, present evidence shows that the most seriously affected groups as regards the probability of dying in the first two years of life and the greatest disparities between social groups are frequently found in the cities.

39. The general decline in mortality experienced by the region is mainly due to decrease in the number of deaths caused by respiratory, infectious and parasitic diseases. At the same time, differences in the incidence of these causes of death in the various social groups, associated with nutritional deficiencies, seem to be the reason for the greater or lesser life expectancy at birth of the members of those groups.

40. Fertility and socio-economic changes. The progress in economic development and the social change recorded in the region have set off a series of social processes conducive to lower fertility at the national level, but have also accentuated the differences in the fertility rates of different

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geographical regions in a country and of various social groups. Such processes include urbanization, the raising of the level of education, and qualitative and quantitative changes in the participation of women in the labour force. To these factors must be added the launching or strengthening of government or private family planning programmes which, while generally pursuing maternal and child health objectives, also affect the national level of fertility.

41. Fertility is lower in urban than in rural areas. Thus, those countries and the regions in them that have attained a higher degree of urbanization are also those which have lower fertility rates. Nevertheless, there are some countries in which the urban population of many administrative units (states or provinces) show higher fertility rates than the rural population of other administrative units.

42. The existence of high fertility rates in the urban population has been explained by a number of factors, but its relative importance has not yet been sufficiently clarified. One factor is the influence on urban fertility of the large-scale immigration of population of rural and semi-rural origin which would seem to transfer its reproduction patterns to the cities. A second factor is the marked difference between the fertility of various social groups inside the cities. All the information available in the region indicates that women with few years of primary schooling or none at all, whose husbands are urban unskilled manual workers or belong to the lowest income strata, have fertility rates which are close to or in some cases even higher than those prevailing among the rural population. Both factors would appear to lead to two very different patterns of urban fertility: one for the middle classes, including skilled manual workers, which have reached or are advancing towards low fertility levels and small families, and the other for the marginal groups or the "non-formal" urban sector, i.e., under-employed urban manual workers, among whom the predominant reproduction patterns are conducive to high fertility and big families.

43. Concurrently, some changes which have taken place in the rural areas of Latin America have begun, slowly in the majority of cases but more rapidly in

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some, to reduce their prevailing fertility rates. The rise in the educational levels of the rural female population and the closer urban-rural contacts have increased their expectations for their children and their desire to have smaller families. At the same time, the modernization of agricultural activities has meant, inter alia, the elimination or weakening of the rural families' traditional bases of economic support and is beginning to alter, at least partially, the possibility of children being able to make any significant economic contribution, directly or indirectly, to the family budget. Although the processes involved in the changes in rural fertility have yet to be studied and much of the information available is not entirely reliable, it would appear that these changes are also gradually leading to a desire to have fewer children than those traditionally composing the rural family.

44. Available information indicates that fertility declines as the level of education rises, owing to its effects on age at marriage and type of union, attitudes to family planning, knowledge of contraceptive methods and access to them.

45. As a rule, in both rural and urban areas of Latin America, the decrease in fertility is considerably accelerated when the women have had complete primary education. However, the exact level at which fertility drops, varies from country to country and, within the countries themselves, between the urban and rural areas, according to the region, and between one city and another. It does not seem therefore as though a specific threshold value can be regarded as the start of the decline in fertility rates.

46. At all ages, the participation of women in the labour force is associated with lower fertility. This is particularly true as regards their participation in production activities outside the home, primarily in the secondary and tertiary sectors, whereas work in the home, in the "non-formal" urban sector or in agriculture, show little or no significant association with fertility.

47. Although subject to error owing to changes in the definitions of the economically active population, inter-census comparisons indicate that the rates

/of female

of female participation in the labour force remained stable or increased very slightly in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean between 1950 and 1970, and that the differences between the rates of participation in the various countries were maintained. From a more qualitative standpoint, however, the distribution of the female labour force has changed drastically from agriculture to the secondary and tertiary sectors. At the same time, although such participation is still concentrated in manual occupations, there is a tendency for it to change to more productive manual employment. If these trends continue in the future, it may be expected that the incompatibility between the role of mother and the role of worker will increase and, consequently, that the association between the participation of women in the labour force and a lower fertility rate will be accentuated. This, however, would necessitate considerably expanding the demand for skilled and semi-skilled female labour, which seems unlikely to happen unless a change occurs in the present urban unemployment and under-employment trends.

48. Although the structural factors which are affecting the speed of the change in rural fertility are the object of conjecture rather than of solidly established knowledge, it would seem that in the Latin American countryside there still predominates a type of family in which the economic contribution of the wife and children continues to be important, at least during several months of the year. In the "minifundio" areas, among rural workers still linked with the large "haciendas" by some variation of the colonate system, and among sharecroppers and tenants of the new estates and "haciendas" in border areas, all the members of the family -including the wife and young children- help to cultivate their small plot of land, either permanently if the father works elsewhere, or in harvest periods.

49. This merging of producing and consuming functions in the family means, on the one hand, that there is no incompatibility in the roles of mother and worker which the woman often fulfils and, therefore, that her work does not affect her fertility. Furthermore, it is unlikely to contribute to a motivation towards small families.

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50. The foregoing factors affect more or less directly and at different levels the attitudes and motivation of couples with respect to birth control. The widespread adoption of family planning programmes in the region has considerably augmented the availability of increasingly safe birth control methods. Nevertheless, the efforts to assess the direct impact of these programmes on the decline in Latin America's fertility rates are few and do not always produce the same results, particularly owing to the difficulty of separating the effects of the programmes from those derived from activities developed outside it. Studies carried out by CELADE on the coverage of the programmes, defined as the total number of women participating in them out of the total number of women of reproductive age, have shown that even though the proportion has increased considerably in the last period for which comparative information is available (1970-1975), only in Chile is it over 20 per cent and Mexico comes close to this figures, but in the majority of cases it fluctuates around 10 per cent.

51. As regards the socio-economic groups covered by the programmes, all the available information indicates that the women belonging to the poorest strata participate in them to a much lesser extent than those belonging to the lower middle strata or the strata of urban skilled and semi-skilled manual workers. In other words, women belonging to large sectors where a high fertility rate prevails have been scarcely touched by the family planning programmes.

52. To sum up, the high fertility rates still prevailing in the major part of the rural population and among the poor living in the cities are attributable both to factors related to their precarious living conditions which lead to a low motivation for adopting birth control practices, and to the difficulties encountered by the members of those groups in participating in government or private family planning programmes.

53. Development and migrations. The changes in the spatial distribution of the population which the region is experiencing are the result of a large-scale migratory process consisting of temporary or permanent migrations between rural areas, emigration from rural areas, and migrations between urban centres.

/54. Temporary

54. Temporary migrations of the unemployed or under-employed agricultural labour force have come to be an essential part of the predominant mode of development in the region, since they enable farms to reduce their permanent labour without the risk of being faced with a shortage of manpower in those periods of the year when they have to increase it. For the abundant under-employed labour force, on the other hand, they provide a source of additional income which to a certain extent acts as a brake on direct rural-urban migration.

55. The heterogeneous nature of the agrarian structure is leading to permanent migrations, both between rural areas and from these to urban areas. Among the former, a distinction should be made between movements towards agricultural areas, permanent international migrations between rural areas of adjacent countries, and migrations that take place from plantations and "haciendas" to small rural hamlets and villages.

56. There is no doubt, however, that rural-urban migration deserves special attention not only because of its magnitude but also because of its cumulative effect on the process of urban concentration and its concomitant economic, political and social factors. Although censuses do not provide information for directly determining the size of such emigration, CELADE estimates indicate that during the period 1960-1970 the rural areas of the region lost 24 million inhabitants, which represents 58.1 per cent of the expected population growth. The transfer of rural population to urban areas over that period represented 53.9 per cent of the absolute urban growth.

57. In spite of the importance of rural emigration in urban growth, a large proportion of the migrants to the great metropolises come from smaller urban centres. The increase in urbanization will no doubt lead to even larger migrations between urban centres in the future.

58. Authors who have reviewed the studies on internal migration in Latin America have come to the conclusion that the size, composition and destination of the migratory flows are determined by the employment opportunities available in different regions and areas; by the living levels prevailing in

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them, particularly in terms of differences in wages and educational level between regions and areas; by the individuals' perception of such opportunities and conditions; and by cultural and psycho-social factors affecting either those perceptions or the individuals' aspirations for themselves and their children.

59. In more general terms, these migratory movements reflect the disequilibria existing in the regional and sectoral development of the various countries, and also the economic and social changes taking place in them. Those who have made a study of the subject usually agree that the mode of development adopted by the countries of the region, traditionally based on import-substitutive industrialization, adapted itself to the urbanization patterns previously existing in the region according to which, with some exceptions, the population was concentrated in one or at most a few large cities. This appears to have led to a high degree of concentration of industrial development and, therefore, of employment and income opportunities in that city or those cities, while it seems that the remaining regions of the countries did not manage to diversify their production structure, required less labour and provided fewer economic opportunities than the former. The experience of most countries of the region confirms this analysis. There are signs, however, that in some countries (for example, Brazil), contrary to what might be expected if this interpretation is accepted, the population has begun to be more evenly distributed between cities of different sizes. At the same time, although few studies have thus far been made of the redistributive effects of various regional development policies, there are also signs that they do succeed in at least partially reorienting the direction of the migratory flows.

60. The effect of the changes occurring in the region's agricultural activities on emigration from rural areas is another point which cannot be overlooked. A study of currently available data on the subject shows that the process of modernization of agriculture has involved radical changes in labour relations and -unless it is accompanied by an expansion of the cultivated area or a change in the types of cultivation to such as may require

/more use

more use of permanent manpower- a decrease in the demand for labour in the sector, which has limited the employment opportunities of a growing labour force and stepped up emigration from rural areas.

61. Added to this is the tendency observed in several countries of the region on the part of the technologically more advanced commercial agricultural enterprises which prefer to contract temporary workers for short periods rather than have large numbers of permanent workers. This has accentuated the historical tendency for independent rural workers to add to their income through this type of work, thus partially avoiding being forced to migrate to urban areas. It also largely accounts for the seasonal rural-rural migrations, since on the one hand there are usually not enough workers in one area to satisfy the demand for labour, and on the other hand the farmers prefer to contract workers from outside the area, and even foreigners, as they accept lower wages and have less organizational powers. In spite of the restraining effect on rural-urban migration attributed to seasonal work, however, it is highly probable that the above tendency has had the effect of increasing it from areas where modern enterprises are operating, owing to the drastic reduction in permanent manpower.

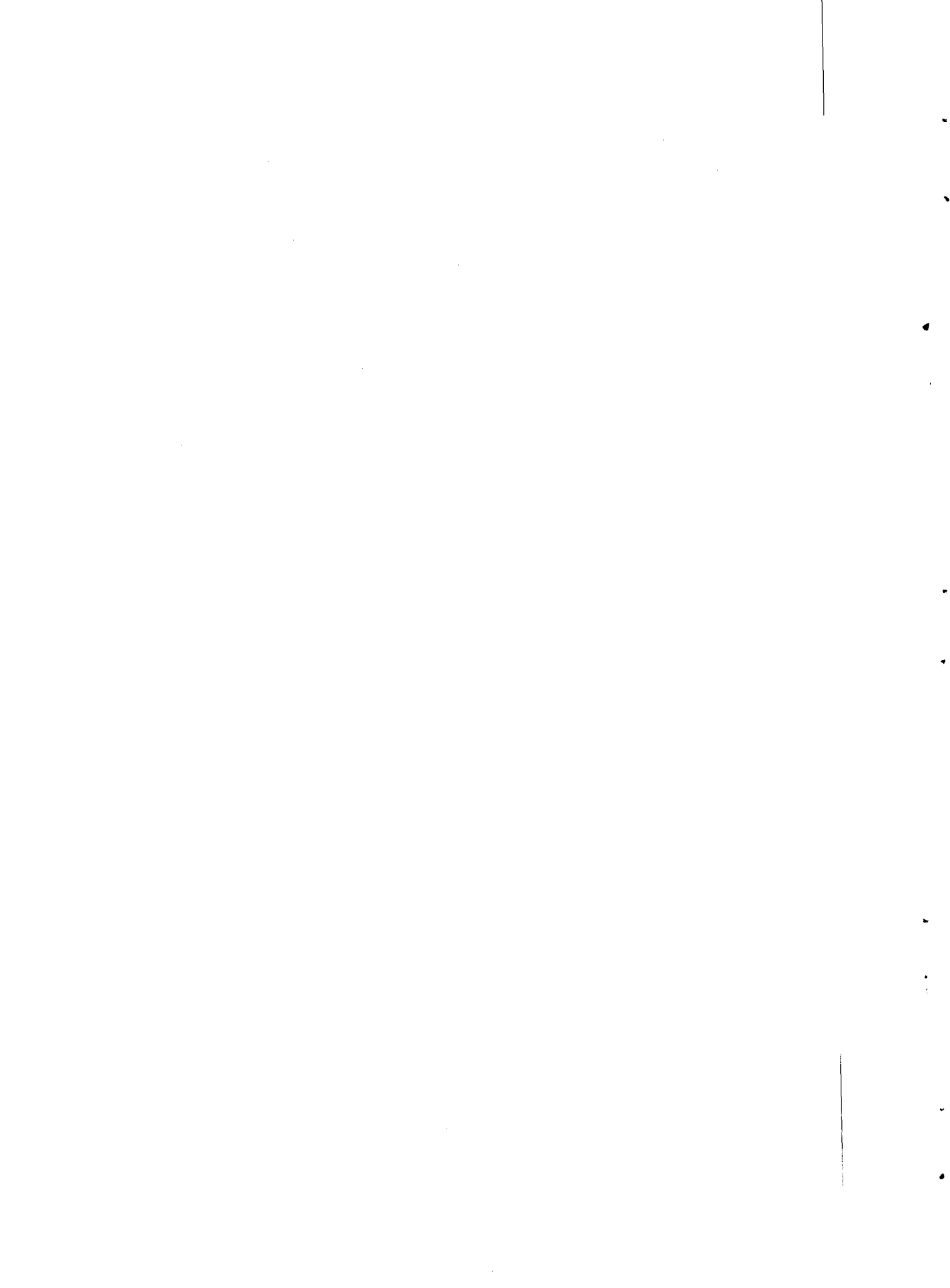
62. The expansion of land under cultivation, mainly through government land settlement programmes, though there are also cases of spontaneous private colonization, largely explains the continuing rural-rural migration found in several Latin American countries. The fact that there is no more land to bring under cultivation in some countries and the establishment of modern technologically advanced enterprises in former colonization areas in others are, however, obstructing this type of migration and reinforcing both the temporary movements of manpower and emigration from rural areas.

63. The characteristics of socio-economic change in the region in recent years, combined with the greater urban-rural integration inevitably brought about by the urbanization process, make it highly doubtful that rural-urban migration can diminish significantly in the next few years; but there are much

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greater possibilities, by means of sectoral and regional development policies, of reorienting the direction of that migration and of urban-urban migration and diverting it to the intermediate cities.

64. From all the above considerations it may be concluded that demographic change in Latin America and the Caribbean is closely related to the major economic and social development trends, and very particularly to the inequalities that still persist in the living levels of the population and the regionally uneven nature of that development. Therefore, the foregoing analysis confirms the necessity of population policies being conceived as integral components of any strategy designed to satisfy the essential needs of the great masses which have hitherto not participated fully in, and to a large extent continue to be excluded from, the forms of development of the last few decades.



III. POPULATION POLICIES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Possible policies

65. Population policies cannot be conceived except in the broader context of development planning and of the role played by the State in the various fields of government policy. To that effect, an analysis of the relationship between population and development, which permits a **greater** integration of knowledge about the determinants and consequences of population dynamics, is an indispensable requisite for the establishment of sounder bases for the design and implementation of population policies. In terms of this relationship, the interpretation of demographic change involves specifying one or more hypotheses on the development process, its past evolution and probable course. Population dynamics, and particularly predictions concerning the social behaviour underlying it, is therefore closely linked with the speed and scope of the changes generated or consolidated by the development process and the strategies guiding it.

66. Demographic policy appears in this context when the change in population dynamics -or in the course of any of its components- is considered of importance in facilitating the achievement of the development objectives pursued and when, at the same time, there is a certain capacity for significantly influencing -directly or indirectly- the demographic behaviour of the population.

67. The majority of the Latin American countries share certain general socio-demographic objectives. As has been seen, although the mortality rate has fallen considerably in most countries, there are some social segments in them (marginal urban, and primarily rural sectors) which still maintain unacceptable rates of child mortality. To reduce the mortality rate in these

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sectors is considered a priority objective. Moreover, with the exception of some countries which are already well-advanced in the stage of demographic transition, most of the remaining countries consider it desirable to accelerate this process by reducing the fertility rate, which is still very high in the least privileged social sectors. Lastly, the attempt to find a more balanced spatial structure of the population that will facilitate a more rational use of natural resources and an improvement in the quality of life is a general widely shared objective.

68. The governments represented at the Second Latin American Meeting on Population endorsed the ethical and juridical framework adopted at Bucharest in which the rights of individuals and the limits within which State action should be confined in relation to such behaviour are clearly established.^{4/} With the exception of the recognized right of States to fix a minimum age for marriage and to regulate the entry of foreigners into their territory, stress is laid in the Mexico recommendations on the need for the State to respect and ensure the full exercise of the rights relating to demographic behaviour, such as: "the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children ..., the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State ... and the right of persons to emigrate and the responsibility of Governments and international organizations to facilitate voluntary international movement". It must therefore be concluded that compulsory legal provisions, which are a valid recourse for controlling a great deal of social behaviour (compulsory insurance, obligatory military or civilian service, compulsory education, etc.) are not applicable in regulating most of the behaviour on which population dynamics directly depends. Therefore, the instruments on which a population policy can rely are mainly measures designed to encourage and facilitate the desired demographic behaviour.

69. As regards mortality, if the aim is to reduce the marked differences in life expectancy between social groups, health policies would have to be combined with other policies designed to eliminate under-nutrition and improve

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^{4/} Report of the Second Latin American Meeting on Population, ST/CEPAL/Conf.54/L.9, March 1975.

the environmental conditions under which the poorest families are living. Neither of these is an easy task, however. Although under-nutrition may diminish somewhat if the prevailing nutritional habits in large population sectors can be changed, it is difficult to achieve any substantial success in this field while situations of extreme poverty and the existing deficits in calorie consumption in the region persist. At the same time, the present trends in the growth and distribution of the population seriously obstruct the success of preventive medicine programmes, the possibilities of better medical attention for groups with the highest mortality rates, and access to other basic services (piped water, sewerage, etc.). In fact, the dizzy rate of urban growth and of the concentration of population in the big cities has led to concentrating the resources in the cities and especially in the great metropolises. Although this has placed the rural population especially that living in scattered areas, at a disadvantage, the government have also found it impossible to meet the urban population's needs at the rate and on the scale required, a situation that in many countries is aggravated by unequal distribution of medical services within the cities. The result is that both the population scattered in rural areas and large population sectors in the major cities continue to live under conditions that are highly propitious for the development of infectious and parasitic diseases. Therefore, the policies with most chances of success in reducing the great differences in mortality currently found in the region are those which are integrated in more comprehensive population and development policies.

70. From the point of view of fertility policies, it seems clear that those aimed at reducing the present rates should be oriented mainly towards rural families and urban families of unskilled and under-employed workers. Policies designed to raise the educational levels and increase the employment opportunities for women outside the home will probably enhance the desire to have fewer children and the parents' educational and employment expectations for them. However, the persistence of the present inequalities in living levels and opportunities for existing in urban areas, the insecurity of employment and the extreme poverty in which many of those families are living would seem to be creating conditions where child labour and a whole system

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of mutual assistance between the various families become essential in order for many of them to survive, so that they feel little motivation towards birth control and the search for proper means. A greater coverage of family planning programmes and their gradual extension to a larger number of areas and social groups will no doubt have direct or indirect effects on those families. These effects will probably continue to be weak, however, if the programmes are not an integral part of the efforts to eliminate the economic and social obstacles which are at the root of the precarious living conditions of the most strategic social groups and to achieve a faster decrease in fertility in those countries of the region where it is still high.

71. The spectrum of policies that could be used to modify the differences between areas, sectors and regions in those factors that appear to be directly determining internal migrations obviously includes wage and employment policies, but also many others which, deliberately or not, affect income and employment opportunities; land tenure, the distribution of agricultural credit, prices policy, foreign trade policy, the distribution of educational and health services, etc. In the last instance, the possibility of affecting the direct determinants of migration by means of government policies is conditional upon the more general characteristics of development at the national, regional and sectoral level.

72. To sum up, the course followed by the demographic transition and the process of urbanization and spatial structuring of the population depends finally, and in the long term, on the stage of economic and social development reached and the particular form it takes. In any case cannot be overlooked that in the short and medium term the individual or family behaviour on which the demographic processes are based may, to a great extent, depend on socio-cultural and psycho-social factors which are not strictly and mechanically compatible with the structural factors and with the material living conditions on which they finally rest. Therefore, the potentially useful policy instruments for influencing demographic behaviour can be distributed over a wide spectrum ranging from those aimed at producing structural

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changes to measures designed to have a direct influence on the individuals' motivation and their access to information about the various options open to them and their implications.

73. It may be inferred from the foregoing that the main instruments for influencing population dynamics in a long-term perspective in their turn constitute central instruments of various sectoral policies, and that the future course of population dynamics largely depends on the content of the sectoral policies, the social classes or groups benefiting from their implementation, and the manner in which these policies are linked at the socio-spatial level. For this reason, a global population policy should be considered as a multi-sectoral policy. It is concluded, moreover, that although the course of the demographic variables depends mainly on the particular economic and social development strategy adopted, there is room for manoeuvre by means of less indirect instruments which in certain situations can contribute significantly to accelerate, moderate or reorient the processes of demographic change.

Population in Latin American development planning

74. The possibility of implementing effective population policies depends on the State's capacity to integrate them in planning.

75. In Latin America a process of increasing institutionalization of planning has taken place which generally speaking dates from the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the following decade. In certain countries the process was initiated even in periods prior to the Second World War. Planning activity headed by the State has represented a considerable improvement in the technical and administrative capacity of State bodies in the formulation of government policies in the region. This has not been a uniform process, since its momentum and scope at the various levels of bureaucracy and of public institutions depends on the actual role assumed by planning in the development strategy advocated by the State's policy-making

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organs. If planning experience is analysed within a long-term perspective it can only be concluded that the planning agents of State action are much better equipped today than a few years ago to tackle the formulation, implementation and evaluation of government policies.

76. Within the same analytical perspective it may be affirmed that, in order to make the plans more effective, long-term perspectives must be included as an integral part of the planning process so that the plans and policies deriving from them can be defined and implemented in a broader context of social change and transformation. This is not advanced as a new idea, since it has been repeated insistently in the analyses and discussions of planning in Latin America. It seems appropriate to emphasize it once again however, for the following two main reasons.

77. The first reason that may be adduced for the inclusion of long-term perspectives relates to the manner of dealing with the critical situations mentioned previously in this document. The first planning attempts carried out by the Latin American countries are characterized by focusing primarily on the attainment of economic growth objectives, an aspect in which appreciable achievements have been recorded, in both magnitude and duration which place Latin America as a whole in a distinctly advantageous position compared with other developing regions. Not much time has elapsed since the first planning efforts, however, to show that, even in those cases where satisfactory results were achieved in terms of the growth of the gross domestic product, little progress was made towards improving a set of situations which were implicitly assumed to be solved as a result of these economic achievements. In actual fact, serious problems persisted and were not infrequently aggravated in relation to the redistribution of income, the satisfaction of basic consumption needs of the whole population, the provision of generalized and efficient education, health, housing and social security services, and the creation of employment.

78. In this context of persistent insufficiencies, increasing demands and critical situations which have been consistently repeated in the region's development experience, there has been an appreciable change in the

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consideration of social objectives in the planning process. A first result of this change towards social development goals has been a greater flexibility in the preparation and implementation of plans and also a more pragmatic approach in the evaluation of planning, which contrasts with the optimistic attitudes that generally characterized the early planning experiences. A second and more important result in the light of the present analysis, is that planning activity is being increasingly understood by the governments as an instrumental part of that broader process, i.e., national economic and social development strategy.

79. The second reason for including long-term perspectives is that they are essential for integrating in planning the variables on the basis of which population dynamics operates. Lacking a long-term perspective that is not static and that exceeds the periods generally covered by plans, usually not more than five years, the incorporation of demographic variables becomes very problematical since they experience slow changes over time. The generally accepted idea that changes in demographic processes are slow caused planning agents to consider population variables as a datum which helps in preparing the initial diagnosis on the basis of a past whose dynamics is extrapolated, without taking into account that the implementation of the plan must affect the population dynamics, influencing the initial view of the long-term perspectives. Furthermore, changes which in the short term are not significant, over the very long term may come to be so important that they have to be taken into account with considerable anticipation, which again strengthens the needs for such perspectives.

80. Nevertheless, demographic analyses, and particularly population projections, have tended to be used by the planner but not incorporated in the planning process, since in practice population continues to be used as an exogenous datum. It must be recognized that a large part of the difficulty stems from the fact that the models and techniques usually employed in the preparation of plans do not satisfactorily solve the problem of incorporating demographic variables as endogenous elements in the model's operation. In any case, the mere utilization of demographic data in the manner described

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is due not only to technical and methodological limitations; another factor is the lack of any explicit statement of specific interrelationships between population dynamics and the development that is being planned.

81. In fact, as has been seen, on the basis of the knowledge obtained with respect to the determinants and results of population dynamics it can be sustained, with increasing force, that the size, distribution and composition of the population are strongly influenced by and interrelated with the behaviour of economic and social variables and processes. The forms, styles and rates assumed by the development process would appear to determine the evolution of mortality, fertility and migrations. In other words, the demographic data used by the planner stems from a dynamics that assumes some hypotheses regarding economic and social development trends, which in essence is the process which the planning agent endeavours to influence. Inasmuch as population remains as an exogenous datum and influences only the diagnosis and the rough quantifications of goals, it is practically impossible to analyse the effect which the planned development process (its forms, styles and rates) will have on the behaviour of the main demographic variables. These will continue to be used and analysed, at most, in respect of their implications for the desired economic and social development, but it will be impossible to determine the effects of such development on the population dynamics. To state explicitly the assumptions and hypotheses of specific interrelationships between population and planned development becomes, then, a necessary condition for progressing from the mere use of the demographic data to its incorporation as part of the planning process. If this process lacks a long-term dynamic horizon, such a step does not appear to be feasible.

IV. FINAL NOTES

82. Finally, a summary is made here of the analysis contained in this document, the object of which was to review the demographic situation in Latin America, its prospects and its implications for development planning, this examination has led to a set of general conclusions which, as they are concerned with the central aspects of the subject, not only establish a basis of knowledge but also provide relevant criteria for action.

83. In the first place, all the available evidence shows that the results of the present demographic trends and their future prospects are already giving rise to two great challenges of increasing scope for Latin America's development activities, i.e: an increase in the labour force, which is reflected in the imperative need to maximize the creation of productive employment for the population of active age; and the intensive process of urban concentration and metropolitanization, which is reflected in the equally imperative need to minimize the typical concomitant effects of that process, the most important being urban deterioration, insufficient services, crowding and pollution.

84. Secondly, the wider knowledge now accumulated strengthens the evidence that population trends and the changes therein are related in various ways with each country's level, rate and mode of development. This evidence provides a basis for maintaining that demographic change in the region is inseparably linked with the characteristics of economic and social development and with the critical situations arising in such development, which are manifested, in particular, by the persistent inequalities in the living levels of the population and the marked regional disequilibria in the countries themselves. Inasmuch as the countries of the region are developing different processes of demographic transition according to the region and social group, there is an urgent need to formulate and analyse policies specially designed for those

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groups whose demographic behaviour is notably different from the average trends at the national level. As regards fertility, in particular, the strong influence brought to bear on it by socio-economic determinants raises serious doubts as to whether the policies directly aimed at diminishing its growth may, in some isolated cases, have lasting effects.

85. Thirdly, it is confirmed, as a corollary to the above, that feasible and effective population policies can be formulated only to the extent that they are conceived as an integral part of a strategy that permits the mobilization of the maximum resources and capacities available to deal with critical situations arising in economic and social development. Therefore, development planning provides the broadest instrumental framework through which population policies should operate.

86. Fourthly, it may be concluded that in order to achieve the full integration of population policies in development planning it is indispensable to incorporate in it demographic variables and their changes which entails including in the planning process a long-term horizon that will permit an explicit statement of specific interrelationships between population dynamics and planned development.

87. Finally, attention must be drawn to the broad guidelines for action deriving from the whole analyses contained here, with a view to contributing towards the formulation of population policies which will be compatible with the characteristics of the countries of the region and will be integrated in their development strategies and plans. The attainment of this objective involves, first, maintaining and increasing the research capacity for specifying the mutual relationships between population dynamics and the development process in each national context, and to prepare models that will permit the demographic variables to be incorporated in development planning. In addition, renewed efforts must be made to train research specialists and planners so that they can co-operate in these activities in their own countries. Lastly, this objective requires that the technical assistance activities carried out by international agencies in the region should be strengthened, which means, in the first place, that those institutions should intensify their

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regional programmes in support of research, training and the collection and analysis of information; and, in the second place, that the governments of the Latin American countries should establish the necessary institutional mechanism for those programmes to be effective.



