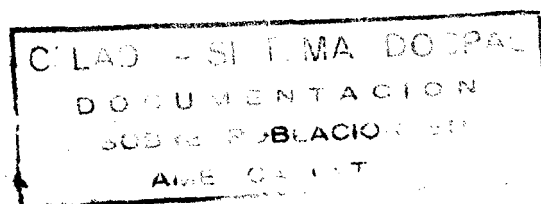


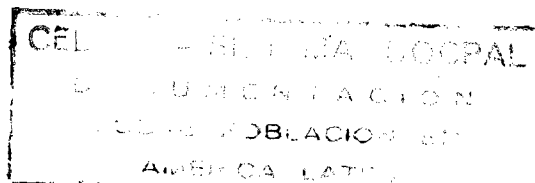
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN  
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

TRAINING IN DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

FINAL REPORT

Project Number: CLA-85-1-613  
Funding Agency: UNFPA  
Executing Agency: ECLAC





TRAINING IN DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS (PROJECT NUMBER CLA-35-1-613)

Project Director's Report

INTRODUCTION

The Project was financed by the United Nations Fund for Population Activity, with ECLAC, Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean serving as the Executing Agency. Eight Commonwealth Caribbean countries/territories participated in the project. (Appendix A).

The project was intended to form part of a programme for improving data etc. as an input to economic and social Population/Development within the Caribbean, and to deal with aspects mainly involving training for improving the quantity, quality and timeliness of population statistics. The Immediate Objectives of the Project, as set out in the Agreement, were to:

- (a) provide in-service training to appropriate designated persons in the participating countries in the collection, collation, evaluation and processing of vital statistics and migration statistics;
- (b) where necessary, assist these persons in obtaining, evaluating and publishing such statistics for the countries;
- (c) as far as possible, train and assist these or other persons in the country, as designated, to use the above statistics along with data from the 1970 and 1980 censuses of population, inter-censal and post-censal estimates of population, inter-censal vital rates and other appropriate demographic measures necessary for the demographic analysis of the countries.

To accomplish these objectives, the proposal envisaged the use of consultants from the Region and staff of ECLAC Port of Spain to assist and train appropriate persons in each participating country in collating, coding and processing of data on births, deaths, marriages and migration. In this way the project would also serve to promote horizontal co-operation among the Commonwealth Caribbean countries.

Basically two separate activities were envisaged. The first involved updating and improving the vital and migration statistics; the second entailed the use of these updated and improved data to make or amend inter- and post-censal estimates of population and of vital rates, and for further research and analysis on population problems. Depending on the quantity and quality of existing data in the different countries, it was expected that "in some countries, only the first of these activities can be undertaken at this stage, and the second would have to be undertaken as follow-up action. In other countries where the data collection is more advanced, much of the time will be devoted to the second activity".

Pre-project activities included visits to the various countries of the Region to determine more precisely the assistance needed by each, and a meeting of intended consultants to decide on the participating countries and to discuss strategy for the project. During the period late-August to early October 1984, a staff member of ECLAC and the project director paid visits to the countries and held discussions with government ministers and officials. A meeting of ECLAC staff and consultants was held in Port of Spain 19-21 November 1984.

On the basis of these visits and the meeting, nine countries were identified for immediate assistance. These countries, and the consultant assigned responsibility for each, were:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Consultant</u>
Bahamas	Norma Abdulah
Belize	Eric Armstrong (ECLAC staff)
British Virgin Islands	Wally Boxhill (ECLAC staff)
Dominica	George Roberts
Grenada	Eric Armstrong (ECLAC staff)
* Jamaica	Barbara Boland (ECLAC staff)
St. Christopher/Nevis	Jack Harewood
St. Lucia	George Roberts
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Eric Armstrong (ECLAC staff)

\* Although it was recommended that assistance be given to Jamaica this country was not served in this first round and will need to be considered for assistance in the second round of activities.

In the case of St. Christopher-Nevis, the basic statistics were deemed adequate, and the principal assistance needed at the present time was some ancilliary calculator equipment to aid in the construction of abridged life tables and the calculation of other demographic measures.

The countries which were omitted at this stage, and the reasons for their omission were:

Antigua and Barbuda: which had not done a census in the 1980 series of

censuses. It was felt that the necessary infra-structure for benefiting from the assistance did not exist at the time and assistance should therefore be postponed to a later date;

**Barbados:** The quantity and quality of vital and migration statistics were so high that it was agreed that no assistance was needed on the first stage and that assistance at the second stage may be considered.

**Guyana:** There was grave need for assistance in this country, but the Government was in the process of reviewing the existing vital registration system. The Ministry concerned therefore felt that the country could not benefit from assistance at the present time. It was agreed that assistance should be given at a later stage.

**Montserrat:** In this country, too, the quantity and quality of vital and migration statistics was reasonably high and it was recommended that assistance on the second-stage analysis be given at a later date.

**Trinidad & Tobago:** Discussion with statistical officials of this country indicated that some assistance might be useful but it was decided that this should be considered at a later stage.

See the reports on the visits in Appendix B.

## PRE-PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A number of steps were taken to ensure that the consultants gave the maximum training and assistance to the countries, bearing in mind the special problems and needs of each country. These included:

**Meeting of Consultants:** A meeting of prospective consultants and ECLAC/CELADE staff was held in Port of Spain in November 1984 as already indicated. This meeting considered the ways in which the project objectives could be best achieved, and agreed on the allocation of assignments.

**Documents for Guidance of Consultants:** A number of documents were prepared to guide and orient consultants in their duties. A document entitled *Guidelines on testing the accuracy and completeness of vital registration and migration data* recommended some procedures that may be found useful in some if not in all countries; another document, entitled *Training Guidelines*, listed a number of critical steps that must be taken by the consultant in each country to achieve support for the project and to maximise the impact of the training programme: *Suggested National Tables for the countries' Annual Vital Statistics Reports* comprised the third document. Two sets of tables were recommended, one for publication, and the other for evaluating the completeness and quality of the data. These three documents are included in Appendix C.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

In each country, in accordance with the terms of reference of his/her assignment, the Consultant met officials from the government departments and other agencies involved in the collection and/or use of population statistics, in order to: (a) examine the system of vital registration now in force and the method now used for recording international migration, and make an on-the-spot evaluation of these systems; (b) evaluate the quality of the vital and migration statistics now being produced, including their coverage, accuracy and timeliness; (c) make recommendations for improvements in the systems and the statistics; and (d) give on-the-spot training to the appropriate local staff with a view to enhancing their appreciation of the importance and use of these statistics and informing them on specific methods which they can take in their individual cases to improve the quality of the statistics. In addition, in many instances, the Consultant was actively involved in assisting and providing technical co-operation to the local officials concerned in putting these specific recommendations into immediate effect wherever possible.

A report (in most instances in two parts - one after each visit) has been prepared and submitted by each Consultant on the activities, as listed above, for the country/countries for which he/she was responsible. These Country Reports are presented in full in Appendix D. Some points of particular interest for each country are given below, and these are followed by a brief summary for the Region.

Bahamas

The Consultant found that under-registration of births is serious, that of deaths less so, while information on international migration was by far the least satisfactory. Enforcement of the 1971 Births and Deaths (Amendment and Validation) Act could lead to appreciable improvement in the quality and coverage of vital registration. A proposal to introduce, from 1 January 1986, a system of having births registered at the hospital before the mother's discharge could lead to a further considerable improvement in birth registration. Training of the staff responsible for registration, monitoring of registration by the Registrar General's Office and on-going publicity are listed as further crucial steps.

Because the Bahamas economy is so geared to tourism, there is a minimum of control of the arrival and departure of international passengers. This is not, therefore, a useful source of information on migration. The Consultant was of the view that the data on Immigration/Work Permits is fairly accurate that probably this might be of some use in devising a measure of immigration; there appears little likelihood of accurate measurement of emigration in the near future.

A comparison of the tables being published in the country's Vital Statistics Report with the Suggested National Tables showed that very many of the recommended vital statistics tables are, in fact being published as recommended while others could be easily modified and improved to meet the recommended lay-out. No tables on migration are, however, published. In the light of the importance of accurate net migration

data for population estimation and projection, this remains a serious shortcoming of the population statistics of this Country.

The Consultant made a large number of important recommendations for improving the vital statistics of the Bahamas (see Appendix D.1) and not only advised and 'trained' the staff concerned on how these improvements could be made, but actively assisted in putting a number of them into effect. The Statistical Department responded enthusiastically to the mission and has undertaken to put into effect as many of the remaining recommendations as possible in the very near future.

In the area of the timeliness of its vital statistics, the Bahamas situation is fairly satisfactory as in 1985 the Vital Statistics Report for 1983 was being typed for publication.

### Belize

In Belize, the occurrence of a birth or death is required to be registered through a Deputy Registrar or a District Registrar or directly with the Registrar General, as set out in the Consultant's Report (Appendix D-2). While the system should, in practice, work quite well, the Consultant found a lack of tight control which, he suspected, resulted in some under-reporting of the vital events.

One recommendation for an improvement in the registration system relates to the registering of births and deaths in the seven Government Hospitals. At present, each hospital has two Medical Records clerks who collect statistical data relating to their hospital. It is recommended

that one of these be designated a Deputy Registrar of births and deaths for occurrences at the hospital.

The Consultant recommended that the present E/D (embarkation/disembarkation) forms prepared by air passengers for the Immigration Department should be replaced by that used by Barbados. But the major problem relates to the recording of arrivals and departures at the border and sea points of entry. E/D forms are not used here; Belizeans can obtain a pass valid for 6 months at a time to go to Guatemala and Mexico. Because of the large numbers involved, control is not tight, particularly when passengers enter (re-enter) the country late at night.

The Consultant held a half-day workshop with representatives from the statistical office, the immigration department, the Registrar General's Office the Tourist Board and the Ministry of Social Services. A number of problems were identified and several recommendations emanated for improving the vital and migration statistics collection system. As in the case of the Bahamas, training, publicity, supervision from the centre were high among the recommendations, as well as an increase in and prompt payment of fees to Deputy Registrars and District Registrars. The Consultant also recommended that consideration be given to the computerisation of the E/D cards.

On his second visit the Consultant was disappointed to find that little, if any action had been taken on these recommendations.

British Virgin Islands

Because of the small size of the territory and its population, the registration of births and deaths is complete and timely: the Consultant feels that in the normal course of events the District Registrar will soon get to know of any birth or death in her district and hence the likelihood of such an event going unregistered is remote.

There is, nevertheless, scope for improving the quality of the data from registration. Since virtually all births occur at the Peebles Hospital, the Consultant has recommended that the records of deliveries of the hospital be used to calibrate the vital registration; moreover, the Hospital Records include some important information, including age of mother, which is not available from the Registrar General's records. To improve the quality of the cause of death data, the Consultant has recommended that the Statistical Department should cease involving itself in the coding of cause of death, and that the cause of death data prepared by the Medical Records Office be accepted as final and official.

The only Vital Statistics Report published so far is for the period 1970-1982. It is proposed to publish these reports every other year so that one is now in preparation for the period 1974-1984. Data for the intervening years will, however, be available for users. The Consultant found that most of the tables recommended in our Guidelines for publication and evaluation are included in the BVI publication, but with some minor variations in coverage or detail. The 1974-1984 publication will include three additional tables recommended by a UN officer in the

Department of Economic and Social Affairs during a visit last year. These will further enhance the publication. In large measure, where the BVI publication gives less detail than is recommended in our Guidelines, this is because of the small size of the population, and the related problem of confidentiality.

Because of the very large tourist trade, and the large and easy travel of residents of the BVI to the US Virgin Islands and vice versa, it has not been possible to put together a series on net migration. The Consultant's view is, in fact, that difficulties are encountered in having any migration data at all. Population estimates are, therefore, prepared without taking net migration into account.

A number of members of the small staff of the Statistical Department have training at the statistical officer level, most of them at the in-service training courses of the CSO Trinidad. With continued contact with ECLAC, the demographic work of the country can be maintained and improved. As in many other countries in the Project, however, a vital but formidable task is to devise some means of obtaining meaningful net migration statistics. The Consultant's Report appears at Appendix D3.

Dominica

The Consultant was very critical of the completeness and quality of vital registration in Dominica. The extremely low rates of fertility, mortality and infant mortality reported around 1980 are, in his view, no evidence of an improvement in these rates but rather of a deterioration in the data.

He has recommended tests for assessing the reliability of the data which will require some special but simple additional census tabulations. If these are provided, he will undertake the assessment. Next he recommends an independent estimation of births and deaths (totals) using information collected by district nurses. Finally, he recommends a thorough evaluation of the administrative procedures of registration with a view to considerably improving a system which the staff concerned are convinced contains many defects.

Some consideration is being given to improving the system; for example, convinced that the present District Registrars are not performing their duties effectively, consideration is being given to transferring the registration duties to the Village Councils.

The Consultant feels that such piece-meal changes should be postponed until a comprehensive review of the system has been made. He had recommended, and ECLAC had agreed to meet the cost of, a meeting of the

staff of the Registrar General's Department concerned, the District Registrars and others to deal with this important matter during his second visit. Unfortunately because of some administrative mix-up the meeting was not held.

Whatever revision of the administrative system is agreed upon, the Consultant emphasises that proper training and supervision of the District Registrars (which are at present non-existent) are absolutely essential if reliable vital statistics are once again to be provided for the country. No such training and supervision are at present available.

Given the above situation, it was considered pointless to discuss changes in the presentation of the vital statistics, or to tackle the more intractable problem of net migration statistics.

A great deal of work remains to be done in Dominica, therefore, and it is recommended that the Consultant's recommendations, plus investigation of the migration statistics, be given the highest priority by ECLAC in its continued programme of assistance. (See Appendix D-4).

#### Grenada

The registration of births and deaths are considered to be accurate. Here, it is the 1981 Census that is believed to be totally unsatisfactory, since the then PRG Government excluded the army and some other significant groups. The statistics on migration are also evidently quite unsatisfactory.

The Government is giving consideration to how a proper count of the population can now be obtained. The Consultant made no recommendations on this or on what could be done about the migration statistics. Further special attention needs to be given to this country. (See Appendix D5)

#### St. Christopher/Nevis

It was agreed that the assistance to St. Kitts/Nevis at this stage should be limited to the provision of a PC-100C Printer for use with the Texas Instruments Tl-59 programmable calculator which had been given to the Chief Statistician when he attended the ECLAC/ISER training programme in Trinidad in 1983.

Although these calculators and printers are no longer in production, it was possible to obtain a printer for the country. The Consultant also provided the Chief Statistician with a programme and full user instructions for constructing Abridged Life Tables, using the Reed-Merrel Method, on the calculator with complete print-out of the life table functions. This has been put into use and the Consultant will, in due course, also provide suitable programmes (and instructions) for the calculation of other demographic measures as appropriate.

For the records, and for possible provision to other countries, the life table programme and the user instructions are attached as Appendix D-6.

At the request of the Chief Statistician, on behalf of the Government, the Consultant has recommended to ECLAC that a 1-2 week seminar on demographic analysis be held in St. Christopher/Nevis particularly for staff of the departments and organizations which do or should use demographic statistics in their work. Consideration is being given to this.

#### St. Lucia

The Consultant was generally satisfied with the work in the field of vital statistics in St. Lucia. The responsibilities are shared by the Statistics Department and the Ministry of Health and this is working well. Discussions with these two organizations suggested ways in which the system can continue to work well and be improved in some respects.

The Consultant recommends that the University of the West Indies (Mona) through the Professor of Demography could assist by preparing inter-censal estimates of population and vital rates and by undertaking a comprehensive test of the reliability of the demographic data. ECLAC should seek to encourage such an arrangement. (See Appendix D 7). Inter-censal estimates for 1960-1970 have since been prepared and are attached as Appendix D7.1.

#### St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Officials in St. Vincent believe that there are some deficiencies in the registration of births and deaths. The Consultant therefore organized a 2-day seminar/training course for deputy registrars and health

officials and a one-day seminar/training course for Immigration officials. This proved to be very beneficial by providing an opportunity both for problems in the field to be discussed and solutions proposed, and for the participants to be given guidance on the performance of their special duties, including acquainting the Deputy Registrars with some of the new legislation relating to the registration of births and deaths of which they were not adequately aware. (See Appendix D8).

As in other countries, the migration statistics are very weak. And here, once again, the Government has questioned the 1980 Census count on the grounds that it is very much lower than the expected population.

#### Regional Summary

The Consultants considered birth registration to be of doubtful completeness in a number of countries and were convinced that there was serious under-registration in the Bahamas, Belize and Dominica. In most countries, even those where registration is considered satisfactorily complete, it has been recommended that the use of Hospital records should be used by the vital statisticians to calibrate and supplement the birth registration.

Death registration was also believed to be somewhat incomplete in one or two countries but, on the whole, this was considered to be fairly satisfactory.

In one instance - Dominica - consideration is being given, by the Government, to changing the registration system to improve registration of births and deaths. In most other countries (British Virgin Islands is an exception as registration is considered complete), the view is that the existing system is adequate but needs to be more strictly followed. Also, there is need for the Registrar General's Office to exercise supervision and control over the district registrars, through training, periodic visits and so forth. In a number of countries there is also need for some improvement in the remuneration and consideration given to the district registrars in view of the importance of their duties.

In all countries the migration statistics are poor. An important contributing factor in the Bahamas and British Virgin Islands is that, in the light of the importance of tourism, there is only the very minimum of record keeping and control of international travellers. In Belize, a major problem is the frequent, and only slightly controlled movement of persons over the land borders. But even in the other countries of the Region, where such special problems do not exist, statistics on net migration are totally unreliable. While some recommendations on these statistics have been made for a few countries (in Dominica and St. Lucia the Consultant did not deal with this intractable problem) these are cosmetic and cannot lead to any significant improvement in this area of statistics. At the next phase of the ECLAC programme of assistance,

consideration should be given to making this a special issue, possibly starting in one or two countries as a pilot project.

The publications of vital (and migration statistics in most countries) are fairly good in most countries, bearing in mind the points above on the coverage and quality of the data. In most instances, however, improvements have been recommended on the basis of the Guidelines prepared for this project. The idea of introducing Confidential Birth and Death Returns with data additional to that provided on the registration records has not been widely accepted. In one instance (BVI) it was felt that because of the small size of the population confidentiality could not be maintained; in any case, much of the additional information required could be obtained from the hospital records, and most birth and deaths occur there.

Generally, then, the picture is that birth registration is of doubtful completeness, death registration is better, but net migration statistics are absolutely poor. On the basis of the training, assistance and recommendations of the Consultants, there can be significant improvements in birth and death registration. ECLAC would, however, need to continue its contact with the countries to ensure that the recommendations are faithfully followed and that the same factors which have contributed, in the past one or two decades, to a decline in the coverage and quality of registration, do not reassert themselves.

The project has had, and is likely to have, little, if any impact on improving statistics of international migration. Since this is such an important component of population growth in the Region, it should be given special attention in the near future.

#### FOLLOW-UP ACTION

The Consultants' recommendations for improving the vital and migration statistics can, for convenience, be divided into three groups: (a) those which have already been put into effect or can be put into effect by the agency or agencies involved in the collection and collation of the data with their existing resources and without the need for higher approval or action; (b) those which require Government approval or action at a higher level including action that would involve additional expenditure, a change of laws or regulations, or a modification of the existing responsibilities and authority of one or more Government departments or agencies and (c) those for which further technical assistance by ECLAC or other agencies is required.

The follow-up action required for each of these groups, and in particular ECLAC's role in such follow-up action will now be considered. In addition, consideration is given to what further action is necessary, both in the countries covered in this phase of the ECLAC Programme and those not yet covered, to achieve and maintain the required quality of vital and migration statistics as well as other related population

statistics in the Region. Finally, since the first phase of the Programme of assistance has been devoted entirely to providing assistance and training at the individual country level, attention is now given to areas in which follow-up action might with advantage be developed and applied at the Regional, Sub-regional or inter-country level.

(a) Recommendations that have been or can be easily put into effect:

While in all countries the Consultant made some recommendations that could be easily put into effect, Bahamas is outstanding both in the number and variety of these recommendations and in the very commendable promptness with which most of them have been put into effect. On the other hand, for Belize, where a much smaller number of these recommendations was made, the Consultant, on this return visit, was disappointed to find that action had been taken with respect to one only. There were very few recommendations of this type in the other countries, and for the most part these related to expanding and improving the relevant statistical publications.

The problem now facing ECLAC/CELADE is how to ensure that these recommendations are all put into effect as soon as possible and, most important, what steps could be taken to maintain the ensuing improvement in the collection, collating and publishing of vital and migration statistics. For this, ECLAC/CELADE needs to maintain a close, on-going

association with the departments and persons involved in this work in each country. The deterioration in the quality of vital and migration statistics in the past one or two decades is to some degree the result of the isolation of these departments/persons. Lack of concern on the part of those in authority but not directly concerned with these statistics plus the normal shifting of staff from one post or department to another, will result in a reduction of interest and a loss of quality unless there is some organization - e.g. ECLAC/CELADE - which will keep training (informally most of the time) and encouraging the officers concerned.

This role was once performed for the English-Speaking Caribbean by Professor G.W. Roberts, first as Vital Statistics Officer of C.D. & W, then as Federal Vital Statistics Officer and later as head of the U.W.I. Census Research Programme. There is now a void, and it is recommended that ECLAC/CELADE should fill that void. This would require periodic (at least annual) visits to each of the countries to discuss problems with the officials concerned, to encourage, train and assist them in their task, to intercede on their behalf with those in authority as necessary, and to work with them in finalising and evaluating the statistics for the year.

(b) Recommendations which require higher Government approval or action:

Consultants have made a number of recommendations - e.g. to increase the pay of district registrars; to provide staff of the Registrar General's department with the opportunity to visit and supervise district registrars regularly; to modify some aspect of the registration or migration recording system - which require approval or action at a level higher than the official concerned with the collection and collation of the population data.

It is recommended that in addition to forwarding a copy of the Consultant's report(s) to a country, ECLAC/CELADE should prepare a special communication to the Government concerned, through the appropriate channel but with copies sent to the senior officials who will be required to initiate such action, advising them specifically of the recommendations and urging their action. ECLAC/CELADE should also seek to institute a regular communication with these senior officials to follow up these recommendations.

(c) Recommendations which will require further technical assistance

In every country, further technical assistance is required to try to find some method of obtaining reasonably accurate statistics on net migration. The very large error of closure between the expected population and the census count suggests that in every case the actual number of net migrants is grossly under-estimated, as the error seems unlikely to be the result of either a continual under-enumeration at every successive

census or an over-recording of births - the number of deaths is in general too small to account for so large an error.

But, for the proper estimation of the inter-censal population and the derivation of meaningful assumptions for population projections, not only the number of net migrants, but also their distribution by age and sex is necessary.

It is recommended that ECLAC/CELADE sponsor a special programme aimed at assisting countries of the Region to obtain a more realistic method of obtaining estimates of net migration on an on-going basis.

Technical assistance has also been recommended to assist the countries to derive inter-censal estimates of population by age and sex for 1960-1970 where necessary, and 1970-1980 (or latest census).

Yet another area which requires further assistance is the evaluation of the accuracy and completeness of vital registration.

The Consultant for Dominica and St. Lucia has suggested that UWI (Mona) could give assistance in the preparation of inter-censal estimates and evaluation of vital registration. ECLAC/CELADE might wish to consider the possibility of a co-operative effort with UWI (Mona and St. Augustine). One approach might be for ECLAC/CELADE to give fellowships to selected officials from the countries to work for short periods at UWI (Mona), ISER (St. Augustine) or the ECLAC/CELADE Unit to work on these projects under the direction of the senior demographers in these institutions.

One possible way of ensuring the continual and active involvement of ECLAC/CELADE Unit in the prompt and accurate collection and collation of vital and migration statistics and related population statistics, would be for this Unit to undertake to produce an Annual Regional Digest of Demographic Statistics. This would, however, require careful attention and planning in consultation with the Governments concerned as well as with the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) of CARICOM.

*with such a small unit, this seems like a not very useful burden  
AHC.*

#### Follow-up Action at the Regional, Sub-regional or Inter-country Level

Some of the above recommendations - the preparation of inter-censal estimates while training persons from the countries to do these, the methods of evaluating the vital registration, the production of a Regional Digest of Demographic Statistics - will involve action at the regional, sub-regional or inter-country level. More generally, once reasonably accurate vital and migration statistics are available, training and assistance should be given to officials from the relevant national offices to assist/enable them to construct abridged life tables and calculate fertility and reproduction rates and other demographic measures needed for demographic analysis. Such training and assistance can very efficiently be given to groups of officials from a number of countries in the Region.

In this connection, it might be mentioned that the Project Director has developed a programme for use with the TI-59 programmable calculator, for the construction of abridged life tables. This has been given to and

has been used profitably by the Statistical Department of St. Kitts/Nevis and other countries have indicated an interest. TI-59 calculators had been given to all participants to the 1983 CELADE/ISER Demographic Analysis Training Course and it is for this reason that the programme has been prepared for use by the statistical departments concerned. The programme works most efficiently, however, when there is a PC100-C printer in addition to the calculator and these printers are now difficult to find. Efforts will be made to obtain a few for use by those statistical departments which wish to extend the use of their calculators to construct life tables and prepare other demographic measures for which programmes will also be made available.

Apart from the vital and migration statistics with which this project has been involved, the Region needs assistance and training in the collection and collation of other population statistics, such as statistics on morbidity, labour force, mobility, etc. However, in the light of the critical importance of accurate vital and migration statistics, it is recommended that ECLAC/CELADE gives top priority, for the time being, to ensuring that these basic population statistics are available accurately and promptly for the Region before turning attention to these other areas. Included in this priority group of concerns should be the improvements in the recording and reporting of cause of death and mobility.

It was agreed that ECLAC should make provision for giving assistance in the area of training in demographic analysis to Turks & Caicos and Suriname, not considered in the first phase, as well as to Guyana, Antigua and Trinidad and Tobago with respect to which it was decided to postpone action.

### The Relevance of the Project for Economic and Social Development

The importance of incorporating population policy into the nation's social and economic development policy formulation and planning is now well recognised and does not need to be reiterated here. But for this accurate population statistics are required. As argued in the 1974 World Population Plan of Action, statistical data on the population are an essential basis for 'the formulation, evaluation and application of population and development policies'. The countries of the Region now all either have or are planning Population Task Forces to recommend a Population Policy for the country, to be followed by some organization for developing and monitoring population programmes based on these policies. They have been operating with inadequate and in some cases misleading data, as is pointed out in the Country Reports on this project.

This ECLAC programme which, through training and technical assistance, aims at ensuring that adequate and accurate population and vital statistics are available, is therefore timely and extremely important. The findings and recommendations of the Consultants in this project have already been drawn to the attention of participants in a recent CARICOM/ECLAC Seminar on Population Policy Formulation involving four countries of the Region. They will similarly be brought to the attention of the authors responsible for writing country monographs in the UNFPA-funded Regional project of Demographic Analysis based on the 1980 census and other population data.

It is, of course, much too early for the project to have a significant impact on the quantity and quality of population data. In the not distant future, however, if this programme is vigorously pursued and the interest of the countries maintained, the countries of the Region should once again have high quality population data that is essential for in-depth analysis and hence for the formulation and monitoring of population and development policies.

Jack Harewood,  
23.12.85