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**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2007-2009 BIENNIAL PROGRAMME OF
REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES OF THE
STATISTICAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS OF ECLAC ***

* Report prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

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A. INTRODUCTION

As stated in resolution 2000/7 of 25 July 2000 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, one of the goals of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is “to prepare a biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, to meet the demands of the countries of the region, subject to the availability of resources”.

At its fourth meeting, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC adopted the strategic plan 2005-2015, which defines the mission, vision, strategic goals, specific goals and principal lines of action on which the Conference should focus its work during the period ending in 2015.¹

Hence, the strategic plan 2005-2015 of the Conference is intended to serve, now and in the future, as a frame of reference for the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation. This long-term vision will enable the Conference to optimize the contribution of this programme to the effective fulfillment of the plan’s four strategic goals. The programme will sum up the specific aims for a two-year period, which should be consistent with one or more of the four strategic goals of the plan and facilitate progress towards its implementation. Furthermore, in keeping with the goals of the plan, the biennial programme should contain clear guidelines to provide direction and stimulate concrete action by countries, international and subregional organizations and the different coordination and cooperation bodies created for these purposes (for example, the working groups and committees of experts).

At its fourth meeting, the Conference approved the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2007-2009, and the Executive Committee, as mandated by the Conference, discussed and approved the final version of that programme at its seventh meeting.²

This report on the progress of the activities specified in the biennial programme 2007-2009, for the period since the fourth meeting of the Conference (July 2007), is organized according to each of the four strategic goals.

B. PROGRESS REPORT

Goal 1: To strengthen the strategic and operational management practices and organization of the national statistical offices and national statistical systems in order to ensure the quality of their outputs and the satisfaction of users

Working Group on Institution-Building. The Working Group acts as the framework for the implementation of the project for the integration and harmonization of social statistics (INAES), corresponding to the Regional Public Goods Program of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The overall goal of the project is to help improve levels of harmonization of measurement instruments and methodologies used to produce statistical data on social issues. The activities of the project were

¹ See ECLAC, Strategic plan 2005-2015 (LC/L.2715(CEA.4/3)), Santiago, 2007.

² ECLAC, Biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, 2007-2009 (LC/L.2814/Rev.1), Santiago, 2007.

concluded and a report on the status of the statistical harmonization process in the areas of health, labour market and education was issued, together with recommendations for the subsequent development of the statistical harmonization process.³

Strengthening of national statistical offices for monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. In coordination with the Working Group on the Monitoring of Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, ECLAC organized two events to strengthen the role of national statistical offices in monitoring the Goals, mainly as regards the implementation of the strategy to reconcile data from national databases with those of international agencies. These were the regional seminar entitled “Statistical and institutional challenges for monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean” (Bogota, 27 and 28 November 2007) and the regional seminar “Towards a regional statistical reconciliation strategy for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals in the Latin American and Caribbean countries” (Santo Domingo, 20 and 21 October 2008).

Enhanced credibility of the national statistical offices. At its fourth meeting, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC welcomed the initiative by a number of countries to take action in the region to promote awareness and discussion on adaptation of the European Statistics Code of Practice, bearing in mind the situation in each country, and requested the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT) and ECLAC to prepare a programme of action to implement this initiative.⁴ The aim of this initiative is to establish guidelines for good statistical practices deemed appropriate for the region and to promote their adoption, particularly at the institutional and organizational level of national statistical offices, taking into account the specific situation of each country⁵, under the principles of professional independence, mandate for data collection, adequacy of resources, quality commitment, statistical confidentiality, impartiality and objectivity.⁶ The following action has been taken to further the project: a working group formed by Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, EUROSTAT and ECLAC was established; a study of the European questionnaire was carried out and a version of it was adapted to the circumstances of the countries of the region; and the self-evaluation questionnaire was circulated and filled out by 19 countries in the region. Lastly, within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Commission and ECLAC, a workshop was held in Luxemburg on adapting the European Statistics Code of Practice to Latin America. ECLAC and EUROSTAT will present a report on the results of the workshop at the fifth meeting of the Conference.⁷

³ See the Final report on the project on integration and harmonization of instruments for social statistics (INAES) (LC/L.3061(CE.5/7)).

⁴ See the Report of the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (LC/L.2795), Santiago, 8 October 2007.

⁵ Principles 1 to 6 of the European Statistics Code of Practice. See the “Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice”, document prepared for the seminar on strengthening national statistical offices: credibility and autonomy (DDR/8), 12 July 2007.

⁶ See Report of the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (LC/L.2870), 28 February 2008.

⁷ See the Report on the development and adoption of the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Goal 2: To promote the training of staff in producing high-quality statistical information, managing national statistical systems and carrying out research into statistical methodology

Working Group on Human Resource Education and Training. One of the outcomes of the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC was the creation of a knowledge transfer network, with a mandate to develop a sustainable training programme at the international level. This training programme was to be developed by consensus, be consistent with the real training needs of the region's statisticians, and combine the efforts and activities of the different training centres located in national statistical offices. Of the activities scheduled for 2008-2009, a total of 11 have been successfully carried out, allowing for the training of 270 experts from 25 countries of the region and two international organizations. In addition, a survey was conducted of training activities carried out by other Statistical Conference working groups, international organizations (International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Centre for Latin American Monetary Studies (CEMLA), PARIS 21 among others) and national statistical offices.

The council secretariat, together with the countries which make up the council of the knowledge transfer network, has actively sought support from international organizations, since lack of funding jeopardizes the network's future. Funding was sought to staff the network with a team of at least two people in order to ensure its future administration and sustainability.

In late April 2008 a request for funding for the network was made to the World Bank. The proposal highlighted the urgent need for funding to create a basic coordinating unit and to implement the training programme since it already includes unfunded training activities. Given the World Bank's requirement that an institution administer the funds, it was agreed that the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI) would do so.

Furthermore, a list of experts on official statistics has been created who can address countries' needs through the network.

ECLAC has worked with the council secretariat to create a website for the network where information can be found regarding its activities, the training programme approved by the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, statistics courses organized by IMF, the Centre for Latin American Monetary Studies (CEMLA) and PARIS 21, training activities for statisticians from ECLAC countries held by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of France and the Conference working groups.⁸

Training in new statistical methodologies. As part of the project on measuring social cohesion in Latin America funded by the European Union, there are plans to organize seminars with a view to achieving a degree of convergence on a basic set of social cohesion indicators and to provide technical assistance in an effort to close the corresponding information gaps.

Training on annual and quarterly national accounts. Within the framework of the inter-agency agreement for technical cooperation between IMF and ECLAC, a course on annual national accounts, held at the Joint Regional Training Center for Latin America in Brasilia from 1 to 12 September 2008, was attended by representatives from most Latin American countries. The course, which was conducted in Spanish, allowed accountants from various countries in the region to share their techniques and methodologies through lectures, discussions on specific topics and workshops with practical exercises, and was highly rated by both instructors and participants.

⁸ See [online] <http://www.eclac.cl/scaeclac/rtc.htm>.

Based on the specific needs of several countries in Central America and in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, a course on quarterly national account statistics was organized with instructors from IMF and the Division of Statistics and Economic Projections of ECLAC. The course was held from 3 to 13 August 2009 and was sponsored by the Bank of Guatemala.

In addition, together with INEGI from Mexico and INSEE from France, and sponsored by French cooperation through a World Bank trust fund, ECLAC is organizing a course for national accounts trainers using KANGARE, which fits into the strategic vision of the Conference, as expressed in its knowledge transfer network.

KANGARE is a national accounting program based on pedagogical and participatory methodology which enables users to analyse the entire central framework of the 1993 national accounts system (1993 SNA). Its objective is to train instructors to use fundamental pedagogical principles and instruments so they can replicate and disseminate this method of formulating national accounts in their countries of origin.

Training in demography. In response to countries' requests to enhance training for human resources in demography, the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC has signed agreements with numerous institutions to expand and strengthen the research and training in demography and population studies as they relate to the social and economic realities at the national and regional level.⁹ Also as part of the effort to offer a training strategy on demography, population and development in the region, CELADE took part in a meeting convened by the Andean Institute of Population Studies (IAEP), Externado University of Colombia and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), held in Bogota in July 2008, at which it presented guidelines for a demographic and population training strategy applied to countries in the Andean region.

Goal 3: To promote the development of technical and methodological capacities to generate high-quality statistical information in the region

1. Millennium Development Goals

Working Group on the Monitoring of Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. As approved at the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, the programme of the Working Group on the Monitoring of Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals was revised in order to focus its activities, during the first stage, on analysing discrepancies between the data produced by countries and the data used by international agencies in monitoring the Goals.¹⁰ With financial support from the IDB Regional Public Goods Program, ECLAC has drawn up a regional statistical reconciliation strategy in order to provide common methodological

⁹ Agreements were signed with the Externado University in Colombia and the University of Cordoba (Argentina). Furthermore, CELADE has taken part in a module on population and development in the demographic analysis course run by the National Statistical Office of the Dominican Republic, and in the postgraduate migration module on population and local development organized by the interdisciplinary programme on population and sustainable local development (PYDLOS) at the University of Cuenca in Ecuador.

¹⁰ At the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee it was also decided that the project to update the methodology for poverty measurement used in Latin America and the Caribbean would be separated from the tasks of this working group. Hence activities carried out under that project can be found in the Report on activities relating to the project for updating poverty measurement methodology used in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.3051(CEA.5/4)).

guidelines for the production of statistics related to the Millennium Development Goals, create opportunities for institutional coordination at different levels and support and promote technical capacities to properly follow up and monitor progress towards the Goals. A series of activities has been undertaken to establish benchmarks and define best practices for statistical production in the region, in terms of both methodology and inter-agency coordination at the national and international levels.¹¹

Updating the poverty measurement methodology used in the region. Within the framework of the IDB Regional Public Goods Program, ECLAC is implementing a project to update the methodology used to measure poverty in the region, in collaboration with the countries concerned.¹²

As a result of work, a general matrix of methodology used to measure poverty has been developed, which includes the entire process of defining indigence and poverty lines, as well as the analysis and correction of income. In the second half of 2009, a regional workshop has been planned with statistical offices on household budget surveys, as an input for building the basic basket used to measure poverty. Furthermore, a workshop of experts will be conducted on conceptualizing and measuring income for poverty measurement. ECLAC has been closely involved with several countries in the region in the process of redefining the poverty line. These events have made it possible to share several of the elements that have grown out of the project, with a view to making progress towards methodological convergence and comparability of poverty calculations among the countries of the region.

Developing indicators to measure social cohesion. With funding from the European Union's EUROsociAL Programme, ECLAC carried out a project on the system of indicators to monitor and assess the degree of social cohesion, which culminated in the publication of the book *A system of indicators for monitoring social cohesion in Latin America* in December 2007¹³ This work has continued through the project on measuring social cohesion in Latin America, funded by the European Commission, which includes the organization of seminars to achieve a degree of convergence on a basic set of social cohesion indicators and the provision of technical assistance in an effort to close the corresponding information gaps. As part of this project, the inter-agency meeting "Towards a set of social cohesion indicators" was held on 2 and 3 April 2009 in Santiago. On this same topic, ECLAC, in cooperation with the Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development (AECID) is carrying out the activities for the "Perceptions of equity" component of the "Policies and instruments for promoting growth in Latin America and the Caribbean", which seeks to design a methodology for measuring opinions on social equity, on the basis of statistical data from Latinobarómetro.

2. Gender statistics

Working Group on Gender Statistics. The Working Group's programme was presented and approved at the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, subject to prioritization of the Working Group's activities. Accordingly, a revised programme giving priority to activities that could produce results by June 2009 was presented and adopted at the

¹¹ See Report on the activities of the working group on the monitoring of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (LC/L.2940(CE.8/10)).

¹² See Report on the activities of the project for the update of poverty measurement methodology used in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.2947(CE.8/17)).

¹³ Pablo Villatoro and Juan Carlos Feres, *A system of indicators for monitoring social cohesion in Latin America* (LC/G.2362/E), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), December 2007.

eight meeting of the Executive Committee¹⁴ This was done in conjunction with the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) and INEGI of Mexico, (which coordinates the Working Group), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC, which acts as secretariat of the Working Group.

International meetings on gender statistics. Two meetings were held during this period in Aguascalientes (México) in collaboration with INEGI, INMUJERES, UNIFEM and the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC, as part of the inter-agency activities of the Working Group on Gender Statistics. The eighth International Meeting on Gender Statistics for Public Policies was held from 5 to 11 September 2007 to share experiences and discuss conceptual and methodological progress, as well as the analysis and use of gender statistics and indicators in public policy. The ninth International Meeting on Gender Statistics for Public Policies-2010 round of censuses, held from 29 September to 1 October 2008, focused on the relevance of population censuses as pivot points for socio-demographic statistics and substantive sources for gender analysis. An intensive training course on gender statistics was also held in the same city from 2 to 4 October 2008.

Time use and unpaid work. During the period covered by this report, two international meetings of experts on time-use surveys were held in Mexico City, organized by UNIFEM and INEGI with INMUJERES and the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC. At the fifth and sixth meetings (2007 and 2008 respectively) participants from United Nations entities, national statistics institutes and mechanisms for the advancement of women acquired important commitments which are laid out in greater detail in the report of the Working Group on Gender Statistics.¹⁵

Guide to time-use surveys. With support from the institutions participating in the Working Group on Gender Statistics, INEGI prepared a project on time use and unpaid work (guidelines for harmonizing time-use surveys in Latin America and the Caribbean), the goal of which is to develop a conceptual and methodological framework and a classification of time-use activities, thus allowing data to be compiled with a gender focus and providing a basis for carrying out national data surveys that provide standardized statistics. This proposal will be reviewed at the technical meeting to consolidate a proposal for classifying time-use activities organized by the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC, UNIFEM, INMUJERES and INEGI, and will then be discussed at the seventh International meeting of experts on time-use surveys, which will be held in Mexico City in August 2009.

Project to eradicate violence against women. The Division of Gender Affairs of ECLAC prepared an interregional project on building up the capacities of countries to eradicate violence against women, entitled "Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women through networking of local knowledge," funding for which was approved by the United Nations Development Account. Implementation of the project began in March 2009, under the coordination of ECLAC and in collaboration with the other regional commissions, the United Nations Statistics Division and the Division for the Advancement of Women. The project's statistical activities make use of a set of indicators of physical violence that was approved at the fortieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (New York, 27 to 29 February 2009).

Gender observatory. Significant progress has been made regarding the establishment of a gender observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean, as provided in the 2007-2009 work programme of the Working Group on Gender Statistics. At their forty-first meeting, held in Bogota, Colombia, on 24 and 25

¹⁴ See Report on the activities of the Working Group on Gender Statistics (LC/L.2935(CE.8/5)).

¹⁵ See Report of the Working Group on Gender Statistics (LC/L.3050(CEA.5/3)).

April 2008, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean approved a proposal for a gender observatory, together with a group of indicators to monitor key themes in the regional gender programme, and ECLAC was requested to convene two technical meetings to discuss the proposed indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean, analysis of which, by definition, is the responsibility of the Working Group on Gender Statistics. The results of both meetings were presented at the forty-second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 4 and 5 December 2008), which welcomed the preparatory work carried out by the inter-agency working group being coordinated by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNIFEM and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Presiding Officers requested that the observatory begin operating immediately and make its studies available to the public on the website of the Division for Gender Affairs of the Commission. The start-up activities for the gender observatory include the preparation of an observatory website and the related database with relevant technical notes on the selected indicators.

Technical assistance. Within the framework of the various extra-budgetary projects funded by UNIFEM, UNFPA and AECID, the Division for Gender affairs has provided technical assistance to the national statistical institutes of Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Peru and Uruguay aimed at promoting the production of gender statistics and the implementation of systems of gender indicators by countries in the area of social information systems, including assistance preparing time-use modules or surveys to measure unpaid work. The follow-up to the activities that have already begun includes technical support for processing statistical information collected in the context of cooperation with the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Honduras. National surveys on the status of gender statistics in five Latin American countries (Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, Honduras and Paraguay) will be published in 2009, with a view to giving statistical visibility to gender inequities by compiling and processing indicators derived from official information sources.

3. Preparation and conduct of the 2010 round of population censuses

Working group on censuses. The working group on censuses of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and CELADE, in its capacity as technical secretariat, conducted a survey in 2008 (which was updated in 2009) of national statistical offices in order to ascertain progress regarding the 2010 census round, to identify the main changes being proposed and to learn about the countries' needs and priorities in terms of national capacity-building for census proceedings. The survey findings (set out in a report)¹⁶, together with ongoing requests for technical assistance, were used to draw up a list of tasks to be addressed and concepts to be discussed with a view to defining the working group's programme and establishing priorities. Thus, four activities were conducted in the fourth quarter of 2008: a seminar-workshop on inclusion of the ethnic perspectives in the 2010 census round, a regional workshop on census cartography for the 2010 Latin American census round, a seminar-workshop on the 2010 census round and internal and international migration and other forms of spatial mobility and a workshop for Redatam +SP specialists training, held in St. Lucia, which was attended by statistics and demography experts from the national statistical offices of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

¹⁶ Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "Censos de población y vivienda. Encuesta sobre estado de avance de los censos de 2010 e identificación de las necesidades nacionales. Informe preliminar de resultados", July 2008, unpublished.

(CDCC) countries, as well as representatives from CARICOM and UNFPA.¹⁷ UNFPA and the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC also convened the Workshop on Preparatory Activities, Analysis and Exchange of Experiences for the Successful Implementation of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Panama City from 17 to 21 September 2007, with the collaboration of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and the Government of Luxembourg.¹⁸ In its presentation, CELADE shared reflections about the experience gained from the 2000 census round, the use of the REDATAM software (retrieval of data for small areas by microcomputer) to analyse and disseminate data from population censuses and to create integrated databases, and to study issues such as the potential of censuses to analyse housing, households and families, specific population groups, as well as issues such as migration. In June 2009 the National Institute of Statistics (INE) in Chile, as leader of the Working Group on Censuses, and CELADE as focal point for the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, held a workshop with the support of IDB and UNFPA entitled “Monitoring the progress of preparations for the 2010 census round in Latin America: Workshop for the Working Group of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC” to review the progress made from 2007 to 2009 by countries on the harmonization process for 2010; present a report on the debate developing in the region over alternative censuses; present the results of workshops on emerging census-related topics organized in 2008; debate methodologies for assessing census coverage; propose census recommendations for cartography, migration, ethnic approaches and census coverage; and prepare a report for the Fifth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. A Workshop on censuses and health is planned for the second half of 2009 to evaluate the experience of the region and propose recommendations on topics such as infant mortality, overall mortality, disability, teen pregnancy and social security coverage, among others.

ECLAC/UNFPA Regional programme on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2008-2011. The work plan for 2009 was signed with UNFPA within the framework of the ECLAC/UNFPA Regional programme on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2008-2011. The plan is designed to build the region’s capacity to compile and systematize the information needed to represent its sociodemographic traits and its specific subregional, national and subnational characteristics, and to develop technically sound analyses that can serve for the development, dissemination and promotion of policies. All of this shows up the region’s position as regards access to and use of census microdata and other sources of sociodemographic information. The project includes considerable support for two substantive activities: the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) + 15 and the preparation, conduct, dissemination and use of data from the 2010 census round, promoting the formation of regional and subregional forums and networks to share experiences and take collective decisions. Specifically regarding the 2010 census round, the project will seek to improve inclusion of emerging issues (such as international migration, internal mobility, ethnic identification and mortality, among others) and promote high-level technical efforts to develop innovative methodologies for the diffusion and use of these censuses, through the democratization of information and preparation of technical staff and non-specialized users.

Technical assistance for processing and management of census data. In 2007 a new REDATAM+SP module for the calculation of income inequality and poverty indicators was made

¹⁷ See Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Report on the retrieval of data for small areas of microcomputers (REDATAM) training of trainers workshop (LC/CAR/L.182), Port of Spain, ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, 3 December 2008.

¹⁸ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), rapporteur’s report on the Workshop on Preparatory Activities, Analysis and Exchange of Experiences for the Successful Implementation of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama, 17-21 September 2007.

available to all users. Work is also ongoing on REDATAM applications to make better use of the combination of vital statistics and censuses. CELADE is working to improve the internal processing modules and data-base creation modules using population, housing and agricultural censuses and is updating the REDATAM system modules relating to regional indicator systems. During the period covered by the report, CELADE continued advising countries in Latin America and the Caribbean on the evaluation, management and use of census data. Thanks to this support, there are currently 13 countries in Latin America and four countries in the Caribbean which provide online processing of census data through a REDATAM server.¹⁹ In addition, the use of specific census information on ethnic groups was disseminated at technical assistance and training workshops conducted for the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (URACCAN), the Council for the Development of Ecuadorian Nationalities and Peoples (CODENPE) and the National Institute of Statistics of Guatemala.

Use and dissemination of census data. Within the framework of cooperation between PAHO and ECLAC, and with support from UNFPA, a document on health and ethnic diversity in Latin America with emphasis on reproductive health is being drafted on the basis of censuses and demographic and health surveys. The study will provide a regional overview of the health situation of women and children, with attention to ethnic gaps and territorial inequalities, and considering the Millennium Development Goals which relate to this subject matter. A first draft of the document is expected by late 2008. Furthermore, in response to a request by the Ibero-American Youth Organization, and with support from UNFPA, CELADE has begun work on a document on indigenous and Afrodescendent youth in Latin America, sociodemographic inequities and policy challenges, on the basis of data from the 2000 census round. The October 2008 edition of the *Demographic Observatory*, prepared by CELADE, deals with sociodemographic information on indigenous peoples in Latin America, including a variety of basic tabulations and indicators for the countries of the region, mostly obtained from population censuses. The April 2009 edition of *Demographic Observatory* updates the national population estimates and projections for all 20 Latin American countries.

Population projections. Given the importance of different sources of information for the preparation of population projections, in December 2007 CELADE, in cooperation with PAHO and UNFPA, conducted a workshop for experts on the use of vital statistics and their scope and limitations. The purpose of the workshop was to learn about recent experiences in the countries of the region, in order to identify and promote the use of vital statistics in the production of population estimates and in the oversight of social programmes, and to make recommendations to help improve the coverage and quality of those programmes. In September 2007, the Interagency Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities set up a working group on population estimates, coordinated by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, with CELADE acting as focal point. One outcome of this work was the preparation of a report on issues and practices in the use of population estimates by international organization.²⁰ As agreed by the working group, CELADE updated its national population estimates and projections for the 20 Latin American countries, extending the estimates to include the population aged 100 and older.

A workshop on population projections will be conducted in August 2009 in Santo Domingo, aimed at training Central American technicians in the methodology used by CELADE for making

¹⁹ See Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "REDATAM informa" [online] <http://www.eclac.org/redatam/default.asp?idioma=IN>.

²⁰ United Nations, Report on Issues and Practices in the Use of Population Estimates by International Organizations (UN/POP/TTPE/2008/1), New York, 15 August 2008.

population projections. During the workshop, the first version of the Demographic Projections program (PRODEM) will be tested in Windows. There will also be a meeting of experts on population estimates and projections in September 2009 to discuss the different methodologies used for estimating and projecting populations in small areas.

System of indicators for indigenous populations and peoples (SISPPI). The system of indicators for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development (1996), which the Latin American countries signed to agree upon specific objectives for the region was updated. The system contains comparable information for the Latin American and Caribbean countries in three priority areas: population and public policy, gender equity and reproductive health and rights.²¹

Information on indigenous and Afrodescendent peoples. With the cooperation of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNFPA, CELADE and PAHO, a second workshop was conducted in December 2008 in Bogota on an ethnic focus in sources of health data, with a view to formulating a series of questions —and a corresponding usage guide— to identify racial or ethnic origin to be included in health information systems. In 2009, a database on indigenous peoples and Afrodescendent populations in Latin America and the Caribbean was developed, which includes different subsystems of information gleaned from population censuses. These subsystems were created on the basis of several projects developed by CELADE in recent years which have received support from United Nations and international cooperation entities and will be expanded and updated according to CELADE activities. Within the framework of the Regional ECLAC-UNFPA programme on population and development in Latin America and the Caribbean 2008-2011, a series of activities are being considered to enhance information on indigenous women's sexual and reproductive health in five countries of the region (Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia). One of the activities includes a pilot programme scheduled for the second half of 2009, which seeks to include questions to identify ethnic origin in vital statistics and health registries.

Emerging issues in census questionnaires. In relation to the 2010 census round and emerging issues, a conceptual and methodological document²² on the inclusion of ethnic identity was prepared on the basis of the experience of the 2000 census round. This document was used in the creation of the main document presented at the Seminar-workshop on the 2010 census and the inclusion of an ethnic approach, conducted in November 2008, which was organized by CELADE, together with UNICEF, UNFPA, the Census Working Group of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, PAHO, UNIFEM and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean. The workshop was attended by representatives from the national statistical institutes, indigenous and Afrodescendent organizations, experts on ethnic issues and other involved parties.

System of indicators to monitor the main conferences and summits. CELADE makes use of the Regional System of Indicators on Ageing (SISE), which contains comparable information for 20 Latin American and Caribbean countries. It allows the processing of information from two census periods (1990 and 2000), which can be disaggregated by sex, age group and area of residence. The system is

²¹ Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "Indigenous and Afrodescendent Peoples" [online] <http://www.eclac.cl/celade/indigenas>.

²² Fabiana Del Popolo, "Los pueblos indígenas y afrodescendientes en las fuentes de datos: experiencias en América Latina", project documents, No. 197 (LC/W.197), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), June 2008.

available as software and can be accessed online.²³ SISE is currently being updated to include a module on population estimates and projections. Similarly, in 2009 the system of indicators to monitor the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development was updated, and priority was given to indicators that are directly linked to the Millennium Development Goals. The degree of progress made towards meeting the goals set forth in the plan of action 15 years after the conference was held was also considered. The Spatial distribution and urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean (DEPUALC) database was also updated to include a set of sociodemographic and Millennium Development Goal indicators at the level of cities and towns with 20,000 inhabitants or more with information from the 2000 census. A publication with the new information will be prepared in 2009 and the update will be made to the online database.²⁴

4. Implementation of the 1993 system of national accounts (1993 SNA) in all the countries of the region and development of economic statistics

Working Group on National Accounts. One of this group's main activities has been the analysis of the situation in the countries of the region with respect to the adoption of 1993 SNA. Given the uneven situation in the countries and the link between improvement of the accounts system and improvement of basic statistics, it was agreed to conduct a survey to identify the main lacks in statistical systems. A consultant from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) of France conducted an assessment of the situation in the countries based on their responses to the survey.²⁵ The working group will present proposals to the Executive Committee, based on its diagnosis of basic statistical needs for building national accounts and the programme of work on industrial statistics for Latin America.²⁶ With this in view, the national accounts working group, in conjunction with the United Nations Statistics Division, IMF and ECLAC, has organized several workshops aimed specifically at defining an appropriate strategy for implementing the international recommendations on national accounts and strengthening basic economic statistics systems.

Regional plan for the implementation of 2008 SNA. One of the main challenges facing the countries of the region is the implementation of 1993 SNA, as well as the incorporation of the recommendations arising from the current review process (2008 SNA). The Luxembourg Recommendations, formulated by United Nations Statistical Office and EUROSTAT, were presented at the International conference on international outreach and coordination in national accounts for sustainable growth and development, held from 6 to 8 May 2008 in Luxembourg. Likewise, and in accordance with the criteria set out by the United Nations Statistical Office and EUROSTAT, the regional commissions can play a fundamental role in coordinating the efforts of international agencies, subregional agencies, donors and national institutions responsible for the preparation of the national accounts in the countries of the region to implement the methodological rules contained in the new manual. The Luxembourg Recommendations have crystallized into a draft regional plan for the

²³ Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "Ageing and Development" [online] <http://www.cepal.org/celade/envejecimiento>.

²⁴ Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "Spatial distribution and urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean (DEPUALC)" [online] <http://www.eclac.cl/celade/depualc/>.

²⁵ See Contribution to the interpretation of the survey conducted in Rio de Janeiro by the Working Group on National Accounts of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (CE.8/DDR/1).

²⁶ See Report on the activities of the working group on national accounts (LC/L.2941(CE.8/11)).

implementation of 2008 SNA in the Latin American and Caribbean countries, which was considered by the experts present at the ECLAC annual seminar on national accounts (Santiago, October 2008)²⁷ and by the countries who participated in the eighth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.²⁸

Lastly, it should be noted that as of December 2008, ECLAC has resumed its role as regional advisor on national accounts, which has allowed it to respond in a timely manner to the technical assistance requirements of several Latin American countries involved in the process of modernizing and changing the base year for their national accounting. The Division of Production, Productivity and Management has continued assisting several countries in the process of changing their base year for the consumer price index (CPI).

Methodological guide to the modernization of national accounts. In response to the demand from countries of the region, the Statistics and Economic Projections Division of ECLAC published a methodological guide for modernizing national accounts in Latin America.²⁹ Based on a reflection on recent experiences and international best practices, the guide puts forward a set of recommendations to make the process of modernizing national accounting in the countries of the region more efficient. Furthermore, and with a view to expanding the use of the SNA for economic analysis and for creating simulation models, ECLAC produced a study which describes the central framework of the SNA and its use in designing and formulating economic policy exercises.³⁰

Seminars for experts. Since June 2007, the Statistics and Economic Projections Division of ECLAC has organized two regional seminars on national accounts in Santiago in October 2007 and October 2008. At the first seminar several substantive aspects of the key issues on the national accounts review process were discussed, such as the treatment of goods for processing, weapons as capital formation and pension fund systems, among others that have direct implications for the national accounting of the countries of the region. In addition, the regional national accounts seminar held on 17 and 18 October 2008 dealt with the technical analysis of the proposal for the regional plan for the implementation of 2008 SNA.³¹ ECLAC, in conjunction with the Central Bank of Chile, also organized a workshop in July 2008 on applying statistical methods to national accounts, which helped demonstrate the practice of time series analysis and management. Representatives from several national and international entities who produce this type of data attended the workshop. Presentations were made by international experts dedicated to the research and development of methodologies and techniques for time series analysis.³²

²⁷ See report on the Latin American seminar on national accounts [online] http://www.eclac.cl/deype/noticias/noticias/6/30146/2007_10_SemCN_informe.pdf.

²⁸ See Proposed regional plan for the implementation of the Luxembourg Recommendations (LC/L.2942(CE.8/12)).

²⁹ Michel Sérurier, "Las cuentas nacionales: lineamientos conceptuales, metodológicos y prácticos", *Manuales series*, No. 54 (LC/L.2765-P/E), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). United Nations publication, Sales No. S.07.II.G.101.

³⁰ Martín Puchet Anyul, "Ejercicios de política económica y sistemas de cuentas de los sectores institucionales" *serie Estudios estadísticos y prospectivos series*, No. 65 (LC/L.2920-P), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). United Nations publication, Sales No. S.08.II.G.55.

³¹ See report on the Latin American seminar on national accounts [online] http://www.eclac.cl/deype/noticias/noticias/6/30146/2007_10_SemCN_informe.pdf.

³² See programme of the workshop on application of statistical methods to national accounts [online] <http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-n/getprod.asp?xml=/deype/noticias/noticias/5/33615/P33615.xml&xsl=/deype/tpl/plf.xsl&base=/deype/tpl/topbottom.Xsl>.

Satellite accounts. As regards satellite accounts, and in response to requests from different sectors and from a wide range of users of satellite accounts in national accounting, a number of meetings and regional seminars have been held, including the ninth Ibero-American meeting on measurement and analysis of tourism.³³ At these meetings, which were organized jointly by ECLAC, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Institute of Tourism Studies of Spain, delegates analysed the progress of statistics, satellite accounts and derived economic indicators in the countries of the region.³⁴

In the area of health, ECLAC hosted two technical consultations on the harmonization of statistics on public and private health financing and expenditure. A subregional training workshop was also organized on the use of economic statistics in the health sector for public policy decision-making, in December 2007. These meetings were organized jointly with PAHO.³⁵

In conjunction with PAHO, and in an effort to improve the technical teams responsible for producing satellite accounts on health, several workshops have been organized on theoretical, methodological and statistical aspects of satellite accounts. In countries such as Brazil, Chile and Ecuador (among others) significant progress has been made recently in the development of these accounts.

Economic indicators on tourism. Together with UNWTO, ECLAC has continued to develop a scheme of economic indicators for tourism as a tool for macroeconomic analysis in this sector, not only for the countries of the region but at the global level, and as an instrument to complement the tourism satellite account. This initiative and the results for the Latin American and Caribbean countries are posted on the Commission's website.³⁶

Classifiers. In the sphere of economic and social classifiers, ECLAC participated in the organization of the United Nations Workshop on International Economic and Social Classifications, which was held in Panama City from 4 to 8 June 2007. The purpose of the workshop was to analyse current revisions of economic and social classifications and the representatives reviewed the implementation and use of national classifications of activities and products and how they related to the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) and the Central Product Classification (CCP).³⁷ Since national technical personnel also need detailed tables of correspondence in order to prepare the national accounts, the ECLAC Statistics and Economic Projections Division is updating the *Cuaderno estadístico* on "Clasificaciones estadísticas internacionales incorporadas en el banco de datos del comercio exterior de América Latina y el Caribe de la CEPAL (Revision 3)", which incorporates the fourth amendment to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS), and the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Rev. 4. ECLAC will continue to provide support for the countries of the region in the process of adopting and adapting these key statistical instruments, through the dissemination of methodological documents and the organization of workshops and expert meetings, in order to learn about and discuss the use of the latest advances in this area.

³³ Further details on gender and health satellite accounts are contained in the latter part of this document.

³⁴ See documentation of Ibero-American meeting on tourism measurement and analysis [online] <http://www.eclac.cl/id.asp?ID=32590>.

³⁵ See documents of the consultation and workshop [online] http://163.247.51.38/desarrollo/css/csspublica/taller_consulta_cepal.htm y http://163.247.51.38/desarrollo/css/csspublica/taller_consulta_cepal2.htm.

³⁶ See Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), "Indicadores económicos del turismo", *Cuadernos estadísticos*, No. 34 (LC/G.2329-P), Santiago. United Nations publication, Sales No. S.07.II.G.83.

³⁷ See United Nations Statistics Division [online] <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/training/default.asp>.

5. Statistics on information and communications technologies (ICT)

Working group on information and communications technologies. Since its inception, the working Group has closely coordinated its efforts with the Observatory for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILAC), which has allowed for an exchange of experiences on measuring access to and use of ICT in the region and has offered a forum for discussing and disseminating the proposed indicators and methodological aspects of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. This has also served to promote the implementation and harmonization of ICT statistics in the region and has facilitated the creation of a regional ICT database by ECLAC.

One important outcome of this collaboration has been the execution of the workshops on information society measurement in Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by OSILAC, in which the working group played an active role. These workshops took place in Santiago (November 2004), Santo Domingo (October 2005), Panama City (November 2006), San Salvador (February 2008) and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, (April 2009). During these workshops, the Partnership's recommendations were made known and discussed, and methodological documents produced by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), EUROSTAT, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other international entities were presented. The experiences of developing countries in ICT statistics were shared, and discussion topics included the conceptual and operational aspects of the effort to harmonize criteria and procedures for designing and carrying out household and business surveys which are the source for ICT data, as well as the definition and creation of indicators, among others.

During the fourth workshop, four subgroups were created to develop and monitor the harmonized measurement of surveys for households and individuals, businesses, education and government, which receive ample support from ECLAC and technical support from OSILAC. The subgroups simultaneously review the methodological aspects of the surveys, the interviews, and the creation of agreed indicators, as well as the definition of new indicators needed to continually monitor the digital divide in all its dimensions and the progress that ICTs can bring in social and economic terms. Following those activities, the group has made progress towards drafting proposals in the following areas which are being circulated among countries for discussion and approval:³⁸

- The new list of ICT indicators agreed upon throughout the region based on recommendations made by the Partnership in 2008.
- The new Compendium of practices on the inclusion of ICT questions in household and business surveys, updated through 2008.
- A new working document containing recommendations for harmonizing the main methodological aspects associated with ICT statistics for households and businesses where discrepancies still exist between countries in the region, as well as a proposal for indicators on access to and use of ICTs in education and the public sector.

³⁸ See the document Diagnosis of methodological topics and new ITC indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.3078(CE.6/16)).

6. Environmental statistics

Creation of the Initiative Group of the working group on environmental statistics. The creation of an initiative group was approved at the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of ECLAC, which was held in Bogota on 29 and 30 November 2007. The initiative group will set out the terms of reference and the mandate of a future working group on environmental statistics, to be reviewed and approved at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Thus, the Initiative Group of the Working Group on environmental statistics was created in February 2008 and consists of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the secretariat of ECLAC, the United Nations Environment Programme and the following countries: Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico and Panama.³⁹ The initiative group's first activity was a videoconference held on 6 February 2008 to define the agenda of work and the responsibilities of each participant, and it was agreed to prepare terms of reference and a programme of work. ECLAC created a virtual forum to facilitate the participatory work. The initiative group presented draft versions of the terms of reference and the programme of work at an expert meeting on environmental statistics organized by ECLAC and held in Havana, from 19 to 21 May 2008 and at the eighth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of ECLAC. The experts examined the documents and made recommendations to improve them, after which they were reviewed and approved by the initiative group. This resulted in the preparation of terms of reference indicating the group's mandate, objectives, members and operating modality. The draft plan of work is included as an annex to the terms of reference. One of the main considerations is that the national teams involved in the new initiative group should consist of officials from national statistical offices or ministries or secretariats of the environment or other official departments responsible for the environment, given the cross-cutting nature of the issue and the fact that in most of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, national statistical offices, together with ministries of the environment, are responsible for compiling and disseminating environmental information, whether statistics, indicators or environmental accounts.

ECLAC also carried out a regional study to ascertain the current state of environmental statistics programmes, identify the main challenges involved and present guidelines and proposals for enhancing progress in the region.⁴⁰

Lastly, from 1 to 4 June 2009, the Statistics and Economic Projections Division of ECLAC, together with the United Nations Statistics Division, held a technical workshop on compiling water accounts in Latin America, the goal of which was to provide country representatives with training on the integrated environmental and economic accounting system (SCAEI). In order to meet this goal, several modules were organized to discuss topics relating to the structure and principal definitions of the SCAEI, methodological aspects and statistical requirements for creating the system, while the experiences and practical problems that might arise in implementing the system in different countries were taken into consideration.

³⁹ See Activities report of the Initiative Group of the working group on environmental statistics (LC/L.2948(CE.8/18)).

⁴⁰ Kristina Taboulchanas and Franco Fernández, "Estado de situación de las estadísticas ambientales en América Latina y el Caribe al 2008: avances, desafíos y perspectiva", *Estudios estadísticos y prospectivos series*, N° 67 (LC/L.3003-P) Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations publication, sales No. S.09.II.G.11.

7. Statistics on migration and remittances

Project on migration and trends in remittances in Central America and the Caribbean. The project, carried out in the framework of the Regional Public Goods Program of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), has concluded its activities and will present its final report at the fifth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.⁴¹

Creation of a working group on migration and trends in remittances. Giving continuity to the IDB Regional Public Goods Program mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, at its fourth meeting, held in Santiago from 25 to 27 July 2007, agreed that a working group should be set up to study trends in migration and remittances in the member countries of the Conference. Honduras was appointed coordinator of the group's activities. In pursuit of the activities entrusted to it, the group prepared a draft plan of work which was approved at the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, held in Bogota on 29 and 30 November 2007. The working group has begun its activities in accordance with the approved programme.⁴²

Goal 4: To promote coordination and cooperation between member countries of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and international agencies

Integrated programme of statistical activities. At the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, a suggestion was made to promote the development of an inventory of statistical projects and activities carried out by international organizations in the region. To that end, a proposal was put forward for the creation of a systematic registry of activities, which might grow into an integrated programme of regional statistical activities similar to the European Statistical Conference.⁴³ Thus, it was agreed at the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC that an initiative group would be created and would present a progress report and a proposal for a work programme at the Committee's next meeting.⁴⁴ The initiative group, which is coordinated by ECLAC and made up of representatives from PAHO, UNESCO and IDB, has now been created and a survey on statistical activities in Latin America has been provided to international organizations. The survey was sent to international organizations and 13 of them responded with information about their statistical programmes and activities in the region. ECLAC created a database with the information received regarding activities planned for 2009-2010, which can be found at the website of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

International Comparison Programme (ICP). ECLAC and Statistics Canada acted as coordinating agencies for the 10 countries of South America and were able to fully incorporate the results of the 2005 census round into the global calculations concluded in February 2009 by the ICP Global

⁴¹ See the Final report on the project on migration and trends in remittances in the countries of Central America and the Caribbean (LC/L.3053(CEA.5/6)).

⁴² See the Activities report of the Working Group on Migration and Trends in Remittances (LC/L.3052(CEA.5/5)).

⁴³ See the Database on International Statistical Activities (Integrated Presentation) (DISA/IP) [online] <http://unece.org/stats/ces.html>.

⁴⁴ See the Report of the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (LC/L.2870), Santiago, February 2008.

Office located at the World Bank.⁴⁵ The proposed scheme includes possible implementation of the next phase of ICP in 2011. The next round will focus on extending coverage to more countries of the region, updating the calculations of purchasing power parities and obtaining more precise measurements of per capita GDP in order to carry out international comparisons and calculate regional macroeconomic aggregates. With a view to participating in the next ICP round in 2011, activities carried out in the biennium 2007-2009 included raising awareness of the need for the programme and seeking financial resources for its implementation. To this end, a project profile including a preliminary budget has been prepared and submitted to potential donors.

In order to move ahead with integration between the Central American countries, Panama and the Dominican Republic, ECLAC, together with the Executive Secretariat of the Central American Monetary Council and with the proactive participation of central banks and national statistical institutes of the subregion, is conducting a project to harmonize ICPs and estimates of purchasing power parity (PPP). The project's purpose is to combine ICP harmonization efforts with measurements of PPP indices within the universe defined by ICPs. The participating countries are Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. The expected outcomes include: support for the improvement and convergence of conceptual and operational aspects of ICP methodologies; methodological and technical studies aimed at advancing with ICP harmonization in the participating countries; estimation of PPP based on parities in household consumption spending, government consumption spending and investment in machinery and equipment; and horizontal cooperation among national ICP working groups in the participating countries to transfer working methodologies used in their harmonized consumer price and PPP indices, including a tool designed by the international price comparison programme to be used by all the countries participating in ICP.

Progress has also been made in the process of ICP harmonization. Although this is not an end in and of itself, the results are essential for the comparative analysis of inflationary processes and constitute a technical improvement in the calculation of ICP carried out by national institutions. Beginning in the second semester of 2009, this work will be broadened to include all Latin American countries, and the new ECLAC initiative of regional activity will be an opportunity for updating previous versions of harmonized ICPs.

Programme of technological cooperation for census taking. In follow-up to an agreement adopted at the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico presented a report at the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee on progress made regarding the proposal on technological and methodological cooperation for the free use of electronic devices and software for data capture, in which the countries were urged to continue their efforts to bring this important initiative to fruition. To this end, with support from IDB, an international seminar was held in Washington, D.C., on 14 and 15 July 2008 on technology for censuses: towards the optimization of technology for compiling and processing statistical data.

At the conclusion of the seminar, several commitments were undertaken, including: creating a draft agreement on cooperation for technical exchanges; conducting two seminars on processing census data using the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro) run by UNFPA; conducting a seminar with the support of UNFPA and IDB to validate the technical experience of Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and the United States; the presentation of a technical cooperation model reviewed by Brazil, Colombia, Mexico,

⁴⁵ See Regional Coordinators for South America, "Final results of the International Comparison Program for South America-June 2007", *project documents*, N° 138 (LC/W.138), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

the United States and Uruguay at the eighth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC; and the drafting by the World Bank, with support from Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, of a funding plan for the project to monitor and assess the Millennium Development Goals through new censuses. Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, IDB, UNFPA and the World Bank are currently taking the necessary measures to fulfill these commitments.