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PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TO THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF
STATISTICS DEALING WITH INTERNATIONAL
MIGRATION IN THE ECWA REGION

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INTRODUCTION

The subject of international migration has attracted a great deal of attention in international, national, and regional organizations. The International Labour Organization (ILO) on its part has given priority to the issue with respect to its impact on the conditions and development of, the work force in both the migrant-sending and - migrant receiving countries. Within the framework of its World Employment Programme (WEP), the ILO in 1977 made an extensive study of the contemporary migration movement in the Arab region. The study prepared by researchers J.S. Birks and C.A. Sinclair was published under the title of "International Migration and Development in the Arab Region". It was later published in Arabic by the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) in co-operation with the ILO.

Meanwhile, the U.N. economic and social organs and committees are currently exhibiting a growing interest in the subject of international migration. Chief among these organs are the Population Division and the Population Committee which have taken relevant action and made recommendations. In mid-1981 the World Bank made a valuable study entitled "Manpower and International Migration in the Middle East and North Africa" which it is currently updating for republication in the foreseeable future.

The International Conferences on Population held in Bucharest in 1974 and in Mexico in 1984 were crucial in drawing world attention to some of the problems emanating from international migration and possible means and ways for solving them. The International Plan of Action for Population adopted by the Bucharest Conference included specific recommendations calling on concerned governments and international organizations to adopt policies and measures designed to regulate international migration and reduce some of its negative consequences.

As regards the statistical aspect of international migration, the U.N. Statistics Office in New York has a special interest in the subject and is sparing no effort in preparing statistics, developing appropriate procedures and methods, and standardizing relevant concepts, definitions and terminologies. In 1981 the Statistics Office adopted a number of recommendations on international migration specifying the main current concepts, sources of information, and aspects to be covered in any study on emigrants. The recommendations also included forty four tables proposed to guide member Countries in conducting statistics on international migration. It seems that these recommendations were not successful enough because their application was impractical and fell short of meeting the required statistical needs.

In fact it is not only international organizations that are concerned with studying the issue of international migration. Some Arab organizations and establishments have made intensive and numerous studies in this field. In 1981 the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait held a seminar on oil and social change in the Arab homeland. In 1983 the Institute held another seminar on the foreign labour force in the Arab Gulf countries (in collaboration with the Centre for Arab Unity Studies). The Centre has also published a number of articles in "Al Mustaqbal Al Arabi" Magazine (The Arab Future) and two books on international migration. The first, written by Dr. Ibrahim Saed Ed Din and Dr. Mahmoud Abdul Fadil, deals with Arab labour mobility - its problems, consequences and policies and the second, by Dr. Nadir Ferjani, examines "Emigration To Oil Exporting Countries". At present the Centre is carrying out a field study on Arab labour mobility in co-operation with the Arab League. In 1985 the Arab Planning Institute will hold an experts workshop on the policies of Arab manpower employment and mobility.

ECWA has been very active in its concern with international migration within the context of international and Arab interest in the subject in view of the nature and special significance of the issue in the region. As already mentioned, ECWA published the outcome of the ILO study on international migration and development in the Arab region in Arabic. With the assistance of the United Nations Fund For Population Activities, the ECWA Secretariat held a regional conference on international migration in Nicosia, Cyprus, in 1981. Attending were experts and researchers in this field. The outcome of the conference was published in two volumes which are considered major references on international migration in the Western Asia region. ECWA and the Arab Planning Institute are currently co-operating in preparing for an experts workshop on the policies of Arab manpower employment and mobility which will be held later this year. Considering the importance of statistics in policy-making and planning for the nationalization of international migration in the countries of the region, ECWA is giving top priority to developing the methodological aspects of statistics on international migration in the region. Its statistical programme of action for 1984 included a proposed meeting of experts to discuss ways and means for developing statistical methods on international migration. It was originally scheduled that ECWA would present a detailed report on the outcome of this meeting to its 12th session to sound the views of member States on the courses of its activities in this field. As the shortage of funds prevented the convocation of the meeting, ECWA prepared the present report. It includes a study of the present situation with regard to statistics on international migration in the western Asian region and a proposed programme designed to establish scientific and methodological basis for developing them.

In this context it is worth noting that the present report is but a first step towards a study of the current conditions of international migration statistics in the region as this will help determine the basis and proceeding points for developing this sort of statistics. The information in this report is exclusively obtained from available office sources, and accordingly constitutes a nucleus for a more comprehensive in-depth study. The programme proposed in this report projects a suitable elaboration of the present study in the light of field information.

I. Particularities of International Migration in the Western Asian Region

The Western Asian region has witnessed active population movements characterized by distinctive features. Ancient history records that the region had witnessed various types of emigrations and conquests which surged at times and receded at others. These range from the early Arab emigrations from the south to the north, which reached their zenith with the collapse of the Ma'reb dam, to the emigrations which coincide with the Islamic conquests. The region also witnessed the Greek and Roman occupation of some parts of the region, and the Mogul, Tatar and European invasions. Modern history also records many events which led to widespread population movements and emigrations. Naturally enough, history also records periods of peace and stability during which the peoples of the region could rest at ease and often lead a pleasant life.

With the advent of the twentieth century population movements and migrations tended to take on new patterns. Early in the century emigration started from Syria to the American continent. This happened precisely at the end of Ottoman rule. The emigration wave continued under the French and the British Mandate over some countries of the region. Subsequently, the Zionist settlement emigration to Palestine took place. It often ran parallel to the general waves of emigration described above. This led to waves of emigration by Arab Palestinian people, which in many cases amounted to forced emigration. It reached its zenith in 1948 and is continuing upto the present day.

With the discovery of oil in parts of the Peninsula and Gulf states, this region gradually attracted increasing numbers of emigrants either from the region itself or from outside it. The phenomenon reached a crescendo in the few years following the 1973 oil price rise and the concomitant growth of investment in various fields of development. In addition to all that, the region has witnessed sustained internal migrations from rural to urban areas and bedouin movements, which have deep roots in history. The latest type of migration in the region is the so-called "brain drain". All this clearly shows that migration

in the western Asian region is a salient feature in both the ancient and modern history of its peoples.

In fact international migration has become a matter of concern all over the world. However, it is a matter of paramount importance in this region in particular, because the economic developments, social transformations and political conditions have been elements of attraction in some parts of the region and of repulsion in others. This led to wide-scale population movements almost unequalled in any other part of the world.

According to some estimates the number of non-citizens in the Gulf Co-operation Council states rose from 1.01 million to 3.95 million during the period from 1978 to 1985. Non-national labour skyrocketed from 38 per cent of the total workforce in 1975 to almost two-thirds at present. The percentage of expatriate manpower is high in most sectors. In the agricultural sector it is estimated at 26 per cent and in building and construction at 68 per cent.

Such a massive flow of expatriates has had a tremendous impact not only on the size and structure of the population and the migrant-receiving countries, but also on the economic, social and cultural life of the nationals. As for the migrant-sending countries, emigration at first helped solve the problem of surplus manpower. Besides, the remittances of the migrants formed a considerable percentage of national income and a major source of hard currency. Recently, some of the negative aspects of international migration have started to appear in the sending countries - or in some of them at least - in the form of manpower shortages in certain sectors. Some, like Jordan for instance, has had to receive Arab and foreign manpower thus becoming a sending and receiving country at the same time. A point to be noted here is that part of the expatriate labour force in some of the countries of the region do not come from other countries in the region. According to estimates, not less than half of them come from outside the region, mainly from Asian countries. On the other hand, emigrants from some countries of the region do not all go to other countries in the same region, as a considerable number go to other parts of the world.

This particular characteristic of migration in the ECWA region has widened the scope of interest. At first it was of interest only to demographers, but recently it has attracted the attention of researchers in economics and in political science. Sociologists have lately joined them in view of the fact that migration flows, both in and out, have a tremendous impact on the social life of the people of the region.

II. The Deficiency of Statistics on Migration

The subject of international migration in the ECWA region has figured prominently at experts meetings and several seminars during the past few years. Many have written about the volume, particularities and consequences of migration in, both the sending and receiving countries. While some writers have cited figures as clearcut evidence, others have complained of the UN availability of accurate figures and information. In fact most of the current figures on the volume and particularities of international migration are based on personal estimations rather than official statistics. One may say that the quantitative and qualitative deficiency of statistics on international migration, on the one hand, and the reservation of some countries on the publication of whatever information they may have on the subject, on the other, have provided an ample scope for personal estimates and guesswork and given wide currency to figures which lack accuracy, consistency, objectivity and, often, impartiality. The deficiency in statistics on international migration is due to a number of factors, chief among which are as follows:

(a) Migration flows were too rapid and intense to be monitored by available expertise and facilities in a timely or proper manner.

(b) Statistical organizations in the region did not accord due concern to the subject despite its gravity. Their attempts to provide relevant data lagged behind the interests of the researchers, analysts and users who could not wait longer for data.

(c) The traditional statistical sources and methods, taken one by one, did not succeed in providing the required statistical data, both in terms of quantity and quality. This is due to the nature of the subject itself. Any qualitative study of immigrants in the receiving countries means the study of a social group of individuals who mix with the nationals, come from various countries, and have their own circumstances and characteristics, not to mention a language of their own in some cases. Making a similar study in the sending countries simply means obtaining data from people who are not present.

However, this does not mean that the deficiency in statistics on international migration applies exclusively to the countries of the region. Nor does it mean that all the international migratory statistics of the countries of the region suffer from the same degree of deficiency. Some countries have, most probably, covered considerable ground in producing such statistics. Besides, some of the statistically-advanced countries must have had successful experiences in this field. Though ECWA at present is suffering from

paucity in many data required for making a comprehensive description and assessment of the current conditions of statistics on international migration in the region for the purpose of proposing methods to develop them, this would not stop it from taking a primary glimpse at the subject. At this stage ECWA will have to depend on available office sources as a prelude to any future endeavour in this respect. We will deal with two basic topics, firstly the problem of statistics, and secondly, the sources and methods of collecting and tabulating statistics on international migration in the region, and their short-comings.

III. The Problem of Definition

Defining the unit of enumeration is of paramount importance in statistical work as it is one of its cornerstones. In essence it is a mould with certain specifications for singling out the observed cases which fit in it and discarding those which do not fall within its scope with the ultimate aim of securing, as far as possible, maximum uniformity between the units under study.

Though it is easy to make a specific and accurate definition of the units to be enumerated and studied according to the needs and goals of data collection, it is not always easy to apply it. When it comes to a subject like that of international migration it becomes all the more difficult in view of the fact that most of the common methods of collecting data on immigrants and international migrants do not provide ample scope for investigation information that would help in applying the set definitions, particularly in the case of United Nations recommendations on international migration and the measurement of its flows. Following is a review of some of these definitions:(1)

- Immigrant stock: The immigrant stock of a country consists of all foreign-born persons present in the country for more than one year.

- Long-term immigrants are defined as persons who have entered the country with the intention of remaining for more than one year and who either must never have been in the country continuously for more than one year, or must have been away continuously for more than one year since the last stay of more than one year.

(1) Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, United Nations Series, M. No. 58, pp. 5-7.

- Short-term immigrants are defined as persons who have entered the country with the intention of remaining for one year or less for the purpose of working at an occupation remunerated from within the country, and their dependants and domestic employees who have accompanied them or come to join them.

The aforementioned constitute examples. Naturally enough there are definitions of long-term and short-term emigrants, departing immigrants, nomads and the like. The question that now arises relates to the question of whether such definitions can be applied in a survey of international migration, and whether they can be applied to other sources of data-collecting such as population censuses or administrative registers, for example? An examination of the prevailing conditions in the region shows that the definitions used in international migration are generally based on what can be applied to every source of information rather than what should be applied. This pragmatism in the definition of immigrants makes it difficult to compare the information obtained from different sources. In population censuses, for example, a question on the place of birth helps in making some estimations on immigration. Some studies based on the outcome of censuses considers emigrants to be persons categorized as "non-nationals". Without consideration of how far this assumption is correct or not, it is worth noting that the data obtained in this case cannot be compared with the data obtained from the arrival and departure registers. These in turn cannot be compared with the residence and work permits, and so on and so forth. This is due to the fact that in each of these cases the data are collected for different purposes, on varying bases and according to certain concepts. Consequently they lack the minimum degree of consistency. However, the search for a simple and practical concept of international migration and immigrants is premature at this stage, because it mainly depends on adopting methods of statistics on international migration suitable to the prevailing conditions in the region. The question of definition has to be shelved until such methods are adopted.

IV. International Migration: Sources and Methods

With the scarcity of sample surveys for statistics on international migration in the ECWA region, the population censuses and some administrative registers are considered the main sources for that type of statistics. However, the data on international migration obtained from these sources are in most cases by-products of schedules and forms originally designed for other purposes. The present study will review the current conditions of these sources and some of the methods used in the countries of the ECWA region, stressing, once again, that such a review and an assessment are within the scope of available data. A more comprehensive and thorough treatment of the subject naturally needs on-the-spot examination of undocumented informa-

tion as well as co-operation between the organizations concerned in the member Countries and ECWA.

A. General Population Censuses:

Data users very often depend on the outcome of general population censuses in their search for some data that may help them in making estimations and studies on international migration. The census forms used in the majority of the countries of the ECWA region mostly contain some questions originally meant to serve other purposes, but help, in one way or another, as indicators of international migration. Besides, specific questions are added to the census forms of some ECWA countries in an attempt to obtain some information on persons supposed to be immigrants. Meanwhile, analysis of certain census data - such as the age composition, for example - or comparison of the results of two successive censuses with data collected from other sources, also helps in making estimations on the net volume of migration and some aspects of the immigration stock. Chief among the questions contained in the census form and of direct or indirect help in making estimations on the immigration stock are those concerning the place of birth, nationality and data on residence and its duration. On the other hand, some ECWA countries have incorporated in their census forms one question or more on the members of the household abroad at the time of the census. This helps in providing some information on the number (or perhaps the characteristics) of emigrants. Annex (1) includes questions related to estimations of the volume of international migration, and incorporated them in the last census forms of every ECWA member Country.

1. Place of birth: A question on the place of birth is one of the internationally-recommended subjects. with the exception of a limited number of ECWA countries - namely, Bahrain, Egypt, and Jordan - all the other states which conducted general population censuses during the Eighties Round of Population Census (1975-1984) have included in their censuses forms a question on the place of birth. In most cases the question was addressed to all persons present in the country (nationals and aliens) at the time of the census. In addition to the great importance of specifying the date of birth in the study of the movement of internal migration it helps in singling out the persons born outside the country. In this respect it may be of greater help than asking about the nationality, particularly in the countries which make a practice of granting citizenship to the immigrants who meet certain qualifications. By classification and cross-tabulation of answers to this question, along with other data on age, sex, country of birth, place of present and previous residence, duration of residence and the like, we can obtain tabulations of paramount importance concerning immigration and the characteristics of the immigrants present in the country during the time reference of the census.

2. Nationality: The question on nationality is also one of the internationally-recommended topics. The census forms in all the ECWA countries, without exception, include a question on nationality. Answers to this question give the numbers of persons present in the country at the time of the census classified according to nationality. With the application of advanced methods of data processing nationality tabulations can be made. These cover the economic social and demographic characteristics of the persons involved. Tabulation of nationality data with the place of birth, in particular, helps the country to know the citizens born abroad, who in fact are predominantly persons granted citizenships after immigration to the country. Though the question on nationality is useful to the country in estimating the number of immigrants, it is also useful to the migrant-sending countries, particularly within the framework of information exchange between these countries.

3. Place of present and previous residence, and duration: These three questions are of great importance in providing indicators of internal migration. That is why they are included in the census forms of Egypt, Iraq, Syria and the Yemen Arab Republic which are known for intensive rural migration to urban areas. In Egypt these questions were linked with the place of residence on a specific date, and in Egypt and Iraq with the reason for changing it. As the main aim of these questions is to examine internal migration, it is addressed to citizens in the first place, and to aliens as a foregone conclusion. However, in other countries, such as Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, the question concerning the duration of residence was confined to foreigners and was followed by a question on the reason for residence. Obviously such a question helps in classifying aliens inside the country into immigrants for the purpose of residence and work or temporary visitors. At any rate the tabulations based on the place and duration of residence of non-citizens help in providing some indicators of international migration and its time-flows.

4. Nationals outside the country: In terms of international migration, the aforementioned questions are confined to information on immigration. Some countries in the region have seized the opportunity of conducting a census in gathering information on their own nationals who happened to be abroad at the time of the census, in an attempt to reach some indicators on migration. Chief among these countries are Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan, Syria and the Yemen Arab Republic. With the exception of Kuwait, the aforementioned countries are characterized by density of migration. The Yemen Arab Republic simply asks about the number of household members outside the country. However there are additional questions in the forms designed by other countries concerning certain particularities about the absentees, reasons for their presence outside the country, date of departure, etc..

In some cases the space to be filled in the census form was divided in two parts, the top for data on the household members present in the country, and the bottom for those away from the country. Obviously data on the number and particularities of the absentees were collected from the household members present in the country.

We believe that collecting data on persons abroad in the aforementioned manner has many shortcomings, from the theoretical point of view. Chief among them is the dropping of a big number of the absentees, or duplicated recording. The risk of dropping exists when a whole household is abroad. In this case the enumerator will find no one to give data on it. The possibility also exists if the members of the original family had broken away from it and every member formed a household of his own. In this case each of the new families will not consider itself concerned with the absent member on the grounds that he is not one of its members. The same situation may result in duplicated recording as more than one household may consider the person abroad as one of its members. In addition to these purely procedural possibilities, there are several factors, which vary from one country to the other, but fall within the framework of either unintentional-bias in responding to questions, such as forgetfulness, or intentions bias, if, for example, the absentee had left the country illegally, for one reason or another, or had contravened one or more of the laws in force to get out of the country. In all these cases no accurate answer can be expected. From the practical point of view, the experience of some countries of the ECWA region showed that such defects and shortcomings do exist, particularly in the case of dense and sustained migration. Syria, for example made two experiments but neither of them was successful. Even in the case of countries which set no restrictions on the emigration of their nationals such as the Yemen Arab Republic, this method scored limited success. The number of persons reported to have been abroad at the time of the last census (1975) was less than 300,000 citizens. The figure is far below the minimum limits of objective estimates of Yemeni emigrants.

5. Other relevant questions (age and sex): Some demographers try to make estimates on net international migration by analysing the age composition of the population, both male and female. It is well known that the age structure is obtained by enquiring about the age (or date of birth) and sex (male or female), which are traditional questions in any census. An analysis of the age composition can provide evidence of migration (immigration or emigration) only if it is selective as far as age and sex are concerned. Primary estimates of net international migration can be obtained by comparing the age composition deducted from the census, with the hypothetical ideal composition of a country. The difference between the two compositions represents net international migration. However, such a method must be pursued

with great care and only when there are no other alternatives. In many cases it is difficult to determine whether any deviation of the actual composition from the hypothetical ideal, is due to emigration or to erroneous recording of age. From the practical point of view, a comparison can be made between the age composition of a country as indicated in two successive censuses. This is done by projecting the population, according to age and sex categories as shown by the first census, onto the date of conducting the second census. By comparing the composition shown by the projection with the actual composition shown by the second census we can draw the difference which is supposed to have resulted from net international migration.

Such methods for making international migration estimates are, to the best of my knowledge, rarely used in the ECWA region at present.

However, the different questions included in the census form for the purpose of obtaining information on the number and characteristics of emigrants do not satisfy the needs of the data users either in terms of quantity or quality for a number of reasons, chief among which are as follows:

Firstly, the indicators obtained on international migrants are general and quantitative rather than qualitative. Accordingly, they are of less value than those deduced from other sources such as household surveys for migration studies.

Secondly, these indicators lack a good deal of conceptual accuracy concerning what is meant by migration and immigrants. Considering any alien present in the country at the time of the census an immigrant is inconsistent with the actual state of affairs. Besides, not every national away from the country is an emigrant, and not every person born abroad is by necessity an in-migrant,.... etc..

Thirdly, even if we take these realistic and simple concepts of migrants as they are, it is difficult to apply one concept to all questions related to the subject. If we assume that the immigrant is every alien who happened to be inside the country at the time of the census (depending on the question concerning nationality), the immigrant according to the question on the place of birth would be every person born outside the country. The immigrant can also be every alien staying in the country for a specific period from the date of his arrival to the date the census was conducted (according to the question on the duration of residence). Accordingly, it is hard to imagine any level of consistency in the information obtained from such questions.

Fourthly, in addition to the intrinsic defects and the inconsistency of data obtained from each of the aforementioned

questions, there are many weak points in the enumeration process itself which make censuses a limited source of statistics on international migration and immigrants for the following reasons:

- (i) Some countries of the region (Lebanon and Oman) have not made any population census up till now. Others could not observe the principle of holding population censuses at regular intervals. The last census in Syria was held one year later than scheduled. In the Yemen Arab Republic it will be held one year later than originally scheduled. In the People's Democratic of Yemen it will be delayed five years, and in Saudi Arabia it may be delayed for four or five years. We have no idea about the plans of other countries in this respect (see Annex 2).
- (ii) Even when population censuses are held at regular intervals they are conducted once every decade in all the countries of the year except Kuwait and the UAE. Accordingly, the data they provide on migration cover a long period and become obsolete after the lengthy period of time taken in processing them.
- (iii) The nature of the census operation makes the data on immigrants a net product of a demographic movement which may be two-way. Consequently it is hard to know the annual migration flows.
- (iv) The census, being a comprehensive enumeration of those present within the boundaries of the country at a certain moment in time, yields indicators of immigrants only. However, when it comes to emigration, reliance on censuses as sources of data has not been of great help.
- (v) Finally, the census form - considering the very nature of censuses - should not include many questions. It contains questions which serve the needs of many users in fields other than international migration. In other words, the addition of more questions on international migration may clash with the wishes of the other persons concerned as this would be at the expense of other primary data.

6. A comparison between the results obtained from censuses with those deduced from other sources of data: The pressing need for data on the volume of migration in some of the countries of the region, more often than not, leads to the search for new methods for deducing estimates on the number of emigrants. These methods are based on making use of any available data that can be of help from one source or another. However, such an approach is

not adequate enough to be adopted on a large-scale. It is the product of certain conditions which may be present in one country and not another. In Syria, for example, there were several attempts to estimate the number of nationals abroad by comparing the results of population censuses with data on the numbers registered in civil records. The comparison showed that the population according to the 1960 census was less than the number of citizens registered in the civil records up to the same year by some 263,000 persons. On the other hand, the results of the census showed that 450,000 persons were not registered in the civil records. This means that the number of absentees at the time of the census may be estimated - with some reservations - at about 713,000 persons. In similar manner the number of absentees up to 1970 was estimated at some 1,148,000. The difference between the two figures - which is 435,000 can be considered net international migration during the seventies. Though the two indirect figures have their own defects, which are parenthetically referred to as "reservations", the presence of the same shortcomings in both estimates brings the estimate resulting from the difference between both of them closer to accuracy.

Syria made other attempts to estimate the number of emigrants with certain qualifications. For this purpose it depended on the results of two successive censuses and on some current statistics on the education sector. The number of persons holding certain certificates was obtained from the results of the first census. Added to it was the total number of holders of the same certificate during ten years, as obtained from the current statistics. After dropping the number of expected mortalities according to the prevailing ratios in the country, the number obtained is the figure which the results of the second census are supposed to provide. By comparing this figure with the one actually offered by the results of the second census the difference will represent the number of emigrants holding a certain educational certificate. This method of estimation has yielded acceptable results consistent with projections and with what could be obtained from other sources. Though this approach suffers from defects resulting from the degree of accuracy in the data used, still, in the absence of other alternatives, it can give acceptable results, considering that the problems posed by the degree of data accuracy do exist in all other approaches, not excluding the methods of direct estimation.

This approach or similar ones may be followed in some countries of the ECWA region, though they are not documented. A field investigation may reveal similar experiences and practices of help to other countries.

B. Sample Household Surveys:

There is much in common between household surveys and population censuses as sources for statistics on international migration. A comparison between the two as sources of statistics on migration is in fact a comparison between the advantages and disadvantages of general and sample surveys. In this respect the two sources only provide data on the volume and characteristics of the immigrant stock. However, household surveys provide an opportunity for collecting more detailed and in-depth data on migrants and help in studying some aspects related to migration such as its socio-economic consequences. This is an advantage they have over the population censuses.

In fact, the region's experiments in household survey for the study of migration is very limited. The aims of the few surveys made by some countries of the region stopped at studying some of the consequences of migration. In 1981 the Economic Division of the Royal Science Society in Jordan carried out research to assess the impact of labour migration and remittances on the household standard in Jordan. Two small-scale surveys were made in Egypt on the expenditure of remittances by Egyptian university professors and teachers working in other Arab countries.

Other household surveys were also conducted in some ECWA countries and migration was one of its goals or by-products. These include the multi-purpose survey in Jordan and the follow-up demographic sample in Syria (1976-1979). The Syrian experiment was based on making seven visits to a household sample for a period of three years. It proved that such surveys can provide some indicators of emigration, particularly if the sample was well designed and its size was suitable. The multi-visit method of survey has this advantage over the one-visit censuses and surveys.

However, the National Household Survey Capability Programme which ECWA is carrying out in the Western Asian region as part of the World Programme is hopefully expected to stimulate household surveys, and consequently the surveys for studies on international migration.

C. Departure and Arrival Statistics: Statistics on persons arriving and departing are collected from the registration of arrivals and departures at land transit points, airports and ports. Registration is usually done by a special form the departing or arriving person fills in and delivers to officials as prescribed. These registrations are originally made for administrative purposes but they can also be used for statistical purposes, particularly if the registration card is well designed in form and content.

The arrival and departure registration is in principle one of the best methods of collecting data on international migration. It is a suitable method for obtaining current accurate statistics on such a difficult and complicated subject like international migration. Besides, monitoring its application is easy and simple. If need be, sampling can be applied to this method. Furthermore, it costs very little when compared to other methods of data collecting. In terms of quality, the arrival and departure registration surpasses all other methods in providing information on time-flows of migrants in and out, and shows some of their characteristics. However, it has its own shortcomings. Success in using it depends on a number of factors chief among which are the extent of the administrative authorities' control of the crossing points of the country, and the possibility of avoiding any confusion at some crossing points marked by the huge number of arrivals and departures. One of the main technical disadvantages of this method is that the answers of the departing or arriving persons to the questions in the form reflect their intentions or wishes and not necessarily what they will actually do after their arrival or departures. In other words, this method may include persons in the category of migrants or exclude them though they do not meet the required conditions. Besides, some answers may be biased for one reason or another.

All the countries of the ECWA region now have arrival and departure cards at their airports, ports and other border points. Generally, these cards contain information of great significance and benefit to a study of international migration as they cover the place and date of birth, nationality, place of embarkation, destination and occupation. In a few cases the cards contain other information such as the reason for arrival or departure. There is discrimination in content between the cards for nationals and for aliens as need be.

A review of the contents of the annual statistical books shows that these countries have published annual figures on the number of arrivals and departures (and sometimes transit travelers) classified according to nationality in most cases. The only exceptions among the ECWA countries as regards publication are Lebanon - which has stopped publishing the annual statistical book in view of the prevailing conditions in the country - as well as Iraq and Oman which now publish arrival and departure statistics covering only the persons who use airports.

Regardless of the fact that the data published by a country do not constitute all the latter's statistics, many reasons make us believe that cards of departures and arrivals are not suitably used for the preparation of statistics on international migration. This is so because the information on which these statistics are drawn is more often than not confined to the number of departures and arrivals tabulated according to

nationality. This constitutes the minimum data that can be deduced from the cards. On the other hand, the great majority of departures and arrivals are not considered migrants according to generally accepted statistical concepts, and the cards should include supplementary questions that might help distinguish one migrant from the other.

Studying the means whereby benefit can be derived from departure and arrival cards in international migration statistics is, at any rate, a matter that should be given due consideration.

Though the methods used in this respect vary, in some aspects, from one country to another due to diverse factors, they undoubtedly have many features in common. However, arriving at definite proposals in this respect necessitates, first and foremost, that an in-depth study of this subject be conducted for the purpose of obtaining more information about the cards used and the measures applied in each country on passengers' arrival and departure, about the possibilities of processing the available data, and about other matters that would make it possible to work out practically feasible proposals in this connection.

D. Civil Registration - Follow-up Population Registers: If follow-up population registers are suitably arranged, they can be useful in statistics on international migration especially if there are registers for aliens. The Western Asian region is considered deficient in this type of registers. Until the early seventies there were only four countries where civil registration systems were found. Even so, in some of these countries, such as Egypt, the systems do not provide for permanent population registers, but are only confined to the registration of some vital events. Since the mid-seventies many other countries have introduced civil registration systems. These new systems, however, have not yet reached the standard qualifying them as a useful source for any type of vital statistics. Even in countries where these systems have been in force for a long time, statistics drawn on such systems are far from being comprehensive and accurate.

E. Other Administrative Records: Some records whose purpose is on administrative one are considered to be one of the supplementary sources of statistics on international migration, provided they are so arranged as to suit the production of statistics that are consistent with those collected from other sources.

The study of annual statistics issued by statistical organs in the countries of the region indicate that there exist various administrative records that are used in varying degrees by these countries for making statistics on international migration. It has been also noted that the migrant-receiving countries use

these records to a much greater extent than others. Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Yemen Arab Republic annually publish statistics that vary slightly as regards details on those granted residence or work permits. While the statistics of Kuwait include the types of permits issued (work permits, work for the first time, extension, cancellation, conversion, final cancellation and departure), same statistics in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the Yemen Arab Republic are confined to the number of those granted visas or work permits according to nationality. In Oman, figures in this respect stand for the number of those granted work cards for the private sector, in addition to the inclusion of many detailed tables showing their various characteristics.

Most of the migrant-receiving countries publish annual statistics on those working in the government, classified according to nationality, age, and the economic sector they are engaged in, in addition to other information. The Yemen Arab Republic publishes annual statistics on the number of passports and visas granted to its nationals. It is believed that such statistics are prepared in most of the countries of the region, though they remain unpublished. Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, publishes figures that stand for the number of those granted Saudi nationality every year.

It is our belief that the present state of affairs with regard to such statistics cannot be taken as a reasonable basis on which estimates of the size of international migration and characteristics of migrants could be made. The data they contain, however, can be usefully indicative in this respect.

V. Proposals

As shown by the previous review of the sources and methods of statistics on international migration of the Western Asian region, the present condition of these statistics is not as satisfactory as should be, for two reasons: firstly, because of the importance and the crucial nature of this subject; secondly, on account of the great interest the subject is attracting in each individual state in the region, as well as at national and international levels. Statistics on international migration in many of the countries of the region fall short of presenting a realistic and updated view, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, of the volume and annual rates of international migration and its diverse effects on the migrant-receiving and migrant-sending countries.

This, however, should not be taken as a discouraging fact, rather it should incite governments and organizations alike to jointly take up the task of developing the sources of statistics on international migration and devising statistical methods and procedures well-suited to the region's state of affairs. Out of

its belief in the importance of such statistics, and in conformity with the work and the responsibilities it shoulders in the region, and as a contribution to the international efforts that were, and are still being, exerted in this field, ECWA has the pleasure of proposing the following project. Its implementation will be a step forward in the quantitative and qualitative upgrading of statistics on international migration in the countries of the region.

A. The Aims of the Project:

1. Long-term aims

(a) The adoption of statistical methods and procedures well-suited to the conditions in the region, with the purpose of measuring its countries' international migration movements, and monitoring their economic, social and demographic consequences, this will be undertaken in a way that best suits the national requirements, on the one hand, and makes it possible to make international comparisons, on the other.

(b) The standardization of concepts, definitions, and the classification methods used by the countries of the region in statistics on international migration.

(c) The enhancement of co-operation between the countries of the region in the statistical field in general, particularly in statistics on international migration, as well as promotion of the exchange of expertise and information between these countries.

2. Direct aims

Preparing and publishing a manual for the Western Asian region that comprises the definitions, tabulations, sources, and methods well-suited to statistics on international migration. The manual which will be prepared in Arabic, may be translated into English at a later stage.

B. Plan of Action:

1. Conducting a field-survey for the purpose of getting acquainted with the following:

(a) The degree of importance lent by the various governmental organs to international migration.

(b) Each country's official attitude towards international migration, and its policies in this field.

(c) The legislations and procedures applied for the implementation of the set policies.

(d) The available sources of information, and the methods used in statistics on international migration.

2. Studying the results of the survey for the purpose of preparing a detailed report thereof.
3. Preparing a preliminary draft for the manual.
4. Assigning a consultant the task of reviewing and developing the preliminary draft.
5. Organizing a seminar of experts whose job will be to discuss the draft of the manual, so that all available expertise be drawn upon to develop its contents.
6. Preparing the final draft of the manual.
7. Submitting the final draft to the countries of the region for study and approval, at the first session that follows its preparation.
8. The processes of printing and publishing.

C. The Parties Contributing to the Project: The ECWA Statistics Division will conduct the field survey and prepare a report on its results. The same division will also prepare the preliminary draft of the manual, in addition to the final draft that will be written in the light of the expert seminar recommendations. The expenses of these tasks will be covered from the regular budget earmarked to the Statistics Division.

The two regional consultants appointed in accordance with the ECWA population programme will also contribute to the implementation of the project. The programme will be financed by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, after necessary arrangements are made with the Fund in this matter.

In addition, ECWA needs around JS\$38,000 to cover the expenses of the expert seminar, printing costs, and secretarial work.

In case the project is approved in principle, ECWA will contact the Arab League for co-ordination and co-operation in implementing the project. ECWA will also approach some Arab and international organizations to secure the required funding.

Annex (1)

Questions Related to the Size of Migration Contained in the Forms of the Last General Population Censuses in the ECWA Countries

	Bahrain	Democratic Yemen	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Kuwait	Lebanon	Oman	Palestine	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	Syria	United Arab Emirates	Yemen Arab Republic
Age	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sex	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nationality	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Place of birth	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Present place of residence			X	X							X	X		X
Previous place of residence			X	X							X	X		X
Duration of current residence			X	X								X		X
Place of residence at fixed address			X	X								X		X
Reason for residence						X							X	
Reason for change place of residence			X	X										
Nationals abroad			X		X							X		X

X Has not conducted general population census

XX No available information

Annex (2)

General Population Censuses in the countries of the ECWA region
1950-1984

Country	Year of holding census			Scheduled or expected year for next census
	Before the seventies round	The seventies round 1965-1974	The eighties round	
Bahrain	1950-1959	1965-1971	1981	1991
Democratic Yemen	-	1973	-	1988
Egypt	1960	-	1976	1986
Iraq	1957	-	1977	1987
Jordan	1961	-	1979	1989
Kuwait	1957-1961	1965-1970	1975-1980	1985
Lebanon	-	-	-	...
Oman	-	-	-	...
Palestine	1961	1972	-	
Qatar	-	1970	-	1985
Saudi Arabia	-	1974	-	1986
Syria	1950	1970	1981	1991
UAE	-	1968	1975-1980	1985
Yemen Arab Republic	-	-	1975	1986