

Challenges and Opportunities for Advocacy and Resource Mobilization in the 2010 Round of Censuses

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International Context

- ICPD Plan of Action: “Valid, reliable, timely, culturally relevant and internationally comparable data form the basis for policy and programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation” 12.12.1
- ICPD +5 Urged UN/Donors to “strengthen the capacity of developing countries particularly LDCs and CIT to undertake censuses and surveys on a regular basis” II,F
- In 2003 The Marrakech Action Plan (MAP) on Better Data for Results reiterated the need for mainstreaming strategic planning and statistical systems, preparing for the 2010 census round.

International Context

- The 35th session of UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) at its 35th March 2004 laid down a range of activities for UNSD to ensure the success of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (PHC).
- United Nations Symposium on PHC was conducted in New York during 13-14 September 2004.
- UNSD and the Regional Commissions undertook a set of activities in response to the decisions of the UNSC at its 35th session

International Context

- United Nations EG Meeting to Review Critical Issues Relevant to the Planning of the 2010 Round of PHC was convened in New York from September 2004.
- UNFPA: "In-House Capacity Building Workshop on Population Censuses: New Directions and Cost Saving Strategies", Princeton, NJ, October 2002.
- Two other workshops were held in Pretoria, SA ("UNFPA/PARIS21) EG Meeting: Mechanisms for Ensuring Continuity of 10-Year Population Censuses: Strategies for Reducing Census Costs, Nov 2001" and EG Seminar on Population Census Data Dissemination, Use and Advocacy, November 2003").

International Context

Aim of these recommendations:

- a) Build institutional capacity in all countries to carry out census operations and make census results available on a regular basis;
- b) Strengthen political commitment, and promote a culture of data-based and informed planning;
- c) Highlight the importance of quality of data, timeliness, rigor, regional and international comparability: censuses are worth their cost!

What Was the Census Reality in 1990s?

- The situation is fairly straightforward in the developed world, except in a few countries where alternative methods are being experimented (Den. NL, France)
- The reality is very different in the developing world, particularly in Africa;

- Increasing costs of censuses as a result of both inflation and sophistication of methodologies but also of growing population numbers;
- Increasingly weakening and depleting national budgets;
- waning international support for census throughout the 1990s. 4/6 countries which responded to a regional survey by the UNFPA CST team in Addis Ababa show as much funding gap as 92% for Eritria, 90% for Sierra Leone, 88% for Liberia, and 52% for Nigeria

- Weak political will and commitment and lack of appreciation of the usefulness of census operations to be carried out once every 10 years;
- Census operations are viewed as separate from the national statistical system; most census staff is recruited on a ad hoc basis once every ten years but released right after the census operations are over, causing problems of continuity;

- Financing of census in many countries being mostly provided by external sources does little to strengthen the sense of ownership by the country and the sense of usefulness. Countries are not demanding censuses for their own planning purposes; they are willing to carry it out if the funding is made available.
- Censuses become an operation to carry out by default, hence the little support.

- Weak coordination of census funding among donors causing delays in initiating operations or upholding sequencing of activities; work plans are delayed or disrupted;
- Lack of national institutional capacity in terms of both operations and analysis, which is also a cause of the delays in delivering results or providing poor quality or policy relevant results

- Structural difficulties, barriers and weaknesses throughout the census chain of operations at the administrative, organisational, managerial, technical and advocacy levels;
- Weak analysis of the data and poor dissemination of and limited access to the census results;
- Cartographic capacity is not maintained through the intercensal period ending up with outdated maps;
- Civil strifes and disturbances of all sorts.



Advocacy and Resource Mobilization Initiative

- Advocacy and Resource Mobilization toward the successful implementation of the 2010 Round (2005-2014) of Population and Housing Censuses (PHCs) in Developing Countries”)
February 2005

Objectives of the Meeting

- Determining the persistent problems pertaining to the different stages of the census, e.g., design, operations, analysis, technical deficiencies, and lack of capacity and the range of incompleteness of censuses across a regional and global spectrum and identifying appropriate capacity-building strategies;
- Ascertaining the reasons for the serious under utilization and poor dissemination of census results at the national and sub-national levels and identifying appropriate strategies to reverse this trend;

Objectives of the Meeting

- Ascertaining the availability (or lack) of resources and budgets, both internally and externally, and identifying appropriate strategies to address the resource constraints in a more sustainable manner both with donor and census users' countries for the next 2010 Round of Censuses; and,
- Redefining and asserting the value of PHCs in measuring progress toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This objective was suggested in light of the redefined development agenda globally along the MDGs and poverty eradication.

Outcome

- Discussions:
- A- Importance of PHCs
- B- Support to Countries
- C- Constraints in Resources Mobilization
- D- Strategies for Resources Mobilization
- E- Advocacy for Resources Mobilization
- F- Promotion of Utilization of Census Results
- G- New Technologies
- H- Knowledge Sharing on Regional Approach
- I- Capacity Building
- J- Census Management Aspects
- K- Other Aspects

Proposed Advocacy Action Plan

1. Sensitizing key national stakeholders like the Government, Parliament, local government authorities and private sector on the importance of the PHC at the national and sub-national levels in order to mobilize resources.
2. Promoting a more important visibility for National Statistical/Census Offices to play a pro-active role in data dissemination strategy.
3. Development of a guidance note on different uses of census data.

Proposed Advocacy Action Plan

1. Strengthening data users service centers as part of the national statistical framework and involving stakeholders in the census operations early in the process.
2. Census data could be used to advantage in combination with administrative and survey data available to provide indicators and information for development programmes including MDGs; acknowledging that while census is absolutely necessary for the achievement of the MDGs it may not be sufficient.

Proposed Advocacy Action Plan

1. Document/share lessons on using new technology.
2. Strengthen exchange of experience at the regional level and facilitate transfer of know how.
3. Promote South/South cooperation for conducting censuses on a regionally coordinated basis. ECOWAS and CEEMAC where countries were experiencing resource gaps, should review their approach for 2010 round by applying good lessons learned from CARICOM, MERCOSUR and SADC. This would help in saving time in making budget proposals and also in reducing costs.

Challenges and Opportunities ...

1. Challenges can be overcome and opportunities seized to ensure a more successful round of censuses.
2. Censuses are the identity of countries beyond all their reason d'être and multiple purposes!
3. Hence their ultimate inevitability.
4. Thank you



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION