

INSTRAW



Report of a Consultative Meeting on
**IMPROVING CONCEPTS AND
METHODS FOR STATISTICS AND
INDICATORS ON THE SITUATION OF
ELDERLY WOMEN**

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*Report of the Consultative Meeting on
Improving Concepts and Methods for
Statistics and Indicators on the
Situation of Elderly Women*

New York
28 - 30 May 1991

Organized by the
International Research and Training Institute
for the Advancement of Women
In collaboration with the
Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

The Consultative Meeting was organized by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in collaboration with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat (Statistical Office) in New York, 28-30 May 1991, to pool expertise and experiences in the use of available statistics and data on ageing and to address problems pertinent to the availability, adequacy and reliability of data on elderly women.

A. Objectives of the meeting

Primarily, the meeting was convened to review and provide guidelines for the revision of the draft technical report based on a study conducted by INSTRAW which, in general, analyzed the changing status and role of elderly women using available statistics and indicators. Logically following the assumption that a voluminous amount of statistics is available, the study was also conducted in an attempt to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing data in approaching problems and issues specific to elderly women. The draft report will be revised taking into account comments of the consultative group and later published by the United Nations.

Beyond reviewing the draft report, the meeting also envisaged to draw specific recommendations on the approach and techniques which can be used for collecting and analysing statistics relating to elderly women and suggestions

for follow-up work at different levels on improving the compilation and analysis of statistics on elderly women.

B. Participants

Participants, a total of 13, are from relevant United Nations agencies, international organizations and individual researchers with professional experience in the area of collection, compilation and analysis of data on the elderly.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Consultative Meeting was opened by Marie Paul Aristy, Senior Social Affairs Officer of INSTRAW, who in her welcoming remarks referred to INSTRAW activities in the area of research related to mid-life and older women. She also referred to the relevant paragraphs of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies which underlined action in specific areas of special concern for elderly women and to the General Assembly resolution 44/76 which invited INSTRAW and the Statistical Office of the UN Secretariat to "pay specific attention to older women in their efforts to improve methodology for data gathering on women." The INSTRAW representative underlined the objectives of the consultative meeting which was to provide clear and concise guidelines for the revision of the technical report as well as to draw specific recommendations for follow-up work on the approach and techniques which can be used for collecting and analyzing statistics relating to elderly women.

Mr. William Seltzer, Director, Statistics Office, addressed the meeting. He said that the meeting took place at an important juncture when countries were engaged in assessing the present situation and setting up goals for the 1990 decade in social, economic and other sectors which included amongst others, population ageing, status of women and children, the youth and the elderly. He referred to the various technical publications on the improvement of concepts for statistics on women undertaken jointly by the Statistics Office and INSTRAW. Reference was also made to a current activity of the Statistics Office to prepare a data base on population ageing to be issued around 1993

in commemoration of the Decade on Ageing. He hoped that the Consultative Meeting would go beyond reviewing the draft technical report and identify substantive conceptual and methodological issues that require further work at the national, regional and international levels in the future.

In introducing the draft technical report entitled "Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Elderly Women", the INSTRAW consultant, Ms Mercedes Concepcion, referred to the objectives, scope, organization and the framework within which INSTRAW intended to develop the report. She stated that as a follow-up to INSTRAW's work on improving statistics and indicators on women in general, the Institute attempts to further investigate and address the conceptual and methodological issues of particular importance to elderly women. In preparing the technical report, current literature on the subject were reviewed including the PAHO/AARP Report on **Midlife and Older Women in Latin America and the Caribbean**, the UNSO-INSTRAW publications entitled, **Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Women** and **Improving Statistics and Indicators on Women using Household Surveys** and a report on the **Situation of Aging Women in the ECE Region**. INSTRAW also identified concepts which should be added and expounded in the technical report and that the presentation and treatment of the topics should be similar to the framework of the aforementioned UNSO-INSTRAW publications.

III. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION*

Ms Marie Paul Aristy, Senior Social Affairs Officer of INSTRAW, called attention to the agenda circulated to participants and outlined the format of the meeting noting that the agenda was organized under three major substantive headings following the organization of topics in the technical report. She

*This section presents details of the discussion on the structure and contents of the report. The discussions went beyond reviewing the technical report and led to the identification of recommendations for follow-up action. These recommendations are summarized and reflected in the successive chapter of this consultative meeting report.

explained that each topic of the relevant sections or parts of the handbook would be introduced by the consultant and to be followed by general and specific comments from the group.

A. Household Headship and Composition of Household

The consultant, Ms Mercedes Concepción, introduced Section I.A. of the technical report. She highlighted that in treating this section, attention needed to be paid to some concepts, most importantly to the concept of "elderly" and "household" and the constraints faced in identifying and classifying household types.

The consultant explained that the concept of elderly, which in the report is defined as those persons 60 years and over, may call for varied interpretations when dealing with different issues. While "age" has been considered as the most relevant variable for identifying the elderly groups, she pointed out that the age criterion (usually set at 60) may need to vary according to the objectives of the study. For instance, it would be considered more relevant to use lower age limits, say 50 or 55, when monitoring and analyzing the economic productivity of the elderly. On the other hand, 60 or 65 might be considered more important when compiling and analysing data on "retirements" and health institutions for the elderly. This issue was put to the fore for discussion.

Following the above comments, the group debated on the importance of making clear distinctions between the concept of "ageing" and of the "elderly" to help define the scope and coverage of the topics that the draft report and the group try to address. To this end, it was recalled that while the term "elderly" referred to a particular segment of the population, internationally defined as persons 60 years and older, ageing refers to the process undergone by the members constituting the population usually indicated by the median age which increases over time. The group, after an exchange of views, agreed to keep the term elderly as defined in the draft report emphasizing however, that depending on the objectives of each chapter or section and if comparisons are necessary, the population could be further divided into relevant sub-groups such as the "young-olds" and the "old-olds". Comparisons with elderly men and with younger age groups of women are also important. For purposes of trend analysis, a truncated cohort, say 50-59 years of age could be studied

as it moves into the 60 and over age groups. Or, the current 60-69 year olds could be examined as they age further into the next 10 years age group. The group suggested to include in the introduction of the draft report, a paragraph summarizing the discussion on the concept of "ageing" and the "elderly" and the reasons identified for examining the situation of elderly women.

After a lengthy discussion on whether the technical report should address both the developed and developing countries, it was generally agreed upon that the focus maintains a global perspective highlighting the urban-rural differences which may be more relevant than distinguishing developed from developing countries.

Turning to the issue of evaluating the adequacy, accuracy and accessibility of data on elderly women, the group recognized the lack of relevant published data on the elderly, defined as those persons 60 years and over and emphasized that although data sometimes exist, these are often not published or made easily accessible.

Since the data sources highlighted population censuses and household surveys, a comment was made about including administrative reports as a source of data. It was agreed that administrative sources were important for providing data describing specific population groups but that such data have to be assessed in terms of their adequacy, and quality.

Although specific variables such as race, ethnicity and religion were of interest for some countries, the group agreed that the Technical Report should focus on those characteristics that are of relevance to most countries and which are based on internationally accepted concepts and definitions.

Referring to the use of a reference person in the household in lieu of household head, it was pointed out that as early as the 1980 round of censuses reference person was already being used in the United States, Canada and Europe. However, owing to lack of uniformity in the definition of such a reference person, the analysis became meaningless and confused. There were conceptual and statistical problems as well. A suggestion was forwarded to this end to include in the draft report a discussion on the conceptual and methodological implications of using the chief earner as the reference person and how this affected comparison across censuses for the same country.

It was suggested that as the family's composition and living arrangements of the elderly, which determine whether an elderly woman lives alone, with her children, siblings or parents or with others, are more relevant for policy and programmes, a sub-heading on Living Arrangement should form part of Section A - Headship, Composition and Living Arrangement of Households. This suggestion received general support which could also be an incentive for further research paralleling that on families featured on Table 4, of the UNSO-INSTRAW publication, Compiling Social Indicators on the Situation of Women on Classification of household type in the 1981 census of England and Wales. Reference to the relevant questions stipulated on the Special Questionnaire on Aging for the Demographic Yearbook prepared by the Statistical Office of the UN in 1990 was brought to the attention of the meeting.

In capturing the status of elderly women in the household and the type of living arrangements, the following three types of tabulations, were recommended:

- a) tabulations based on the elderly population, by age groups and by sex, showing coresidence with relatives (spouse, own parents, children, grandchildren and others) and with non-relatives;
- b) households headed by elderly women and their composition; and
- c) households that have one or more elderly women.

In addition, data relevant for studying the economic and social welfare of elderly women should be tabulated according to their living arrangements. Special questions may be added to surveys, as feasible, in-order to assess the frequency, timing, and causes of changes on women's well-being.

Capturing non-economic activities through time-use studies and other types of surveys was also emphasized. In relation to this, the importance of compiling and presenting sample questionnaires, modules and relevant tabulations already conducted and/or applied in other countries was considered most useful. As a follow-up study and publication focusing on the conceptual and methodological issues relevant to compiling statistics and indicators on elderly women is envisaged, it was suggested that these sample questionnaires and tabulation should form part of the publication.

Referring to the topic on socio-economic characteristics of households, specific recommendations pertinent to corresponding sections of the technical report are identified as follows:

a) inclusion of women's entitlement to pension as part of the section on total incomes of household with elderly members, (see page 28 of the technical report, d);

b) reporting on the health status of other members of the household in addition, and in relation to the health status and degree of reliance of elderly individuals, (see page 29 of the technical report, f);

c) inclusion of the social services provided by NGOs and the community, (see page 29 of the technical report, g).

B. Migration and Households

The consultant briefly introduced the topic explaining the process of migration and its impact on the elderly both on the individual and societal levels using data available.

The group recognized that migration, in particular, return migration, either internal or external, is common among the elderly. Death of a spouse, retirement, health conditions, support of children, etc. are among the reasons for migration which consequently, either dissolve or combine households. It was however reported that in some countries some basic information/data do not exist. In Latin America for instance, data on place of residence 5 years ago are not available. In the absence of such information on migration, indirect estimations such as comparative analyses of sex ratios by urban and rural are being utilized which although could be good proxy indicators for determining migration flows are not reliable and good measures due to errors compounded.

The following specific issues were recommended to be analyzed as well in the technical report:

- a) question on reasons for migration in addition to the question on when the move was made;
- l) international migration patterns as it relates to the socio-economic role of elderly women;
- c) return migration upon retirement with its implications on the social security and pension arrangements of the elderly.

C. Marital/Union Status and Life Cycle Patterns

Referring to the topic on marital/union status and life cycle patterns of elderly women, the consultant briefly introduced the highlights under each of the following sections: a) marriage variants; b) marital status distributions at the older ages; c) marital dissolution and remarriage; and d) the relationship between marital/union status and women's economic situation.

Recognizing the relevance of the topic in determining the living arrangements of the households, it was recommended that its analysis should be made in close coordination with the topic on household, headship and living arrangement.

The discussion particularly focussed on the importance of collecting and further analysis of indicators relevant to widowhood and consensual unions. Considering that the widowed population represent a large segment of elderly women and that women in consensual unions face particularly more serious problems than others in regard to their rights to husbands' pension, estate and other income, it was suggested that special studies of elderly widowed and those left behind in consensual unions should be supported and encouraged. Measures of age at widowhood and also the increment-decrement life table be calculated as useful status indicators to study marital union and dissolution. Detailed marital classifications by rural/urban and age groups after 60 should also be published.

In presenting and analyzing the marital status of elderly women, it was suggested that comparative data and illustrations should be provided in the

technical report as Japan (which is currently used as an example) does not reflect the average experience of all countries particularly on widowhood. Reference or recommendation was also made on the use of the multi-stage tabulations in analyzing marital dissolution patterns.

D. Measuring Elderly Women's Performance in the Regular Education System

In light of increasing life expectancy, elderly women would spend over 15 years in what is described as Third Age. In making the best use of this stage of life, the level of literacy and educational training of the elderly are most important. Educational programmes such as Elderly Hostels and the Universities for the Third Age are examples of Institutions that have been established and are being run in some countries to update/upgrade the educational levels of the elderly and at the same time help reap the benefits of new technology. Information on these programmes and community facilities should be compiled and disseminated to make them known and accessible to all. An Organization should be established to collect and disseminate detailed information and statistics on these and on other adult literacy programmes as well, by rural and urban areas.

Furthermore, it was suggested that ethnographic studies on the types of education programmes available outside the formal education system and on the reasons why women are pursuing the courses they are enrolled in should be encouraged as these have enormous implications for the subsequent well-being of the individuals particularly during their old age.

E. Elderly Women's Economic Activity/Social Support

Measuring and Describing the Actual Supply of Female Labour

The discussion suggested in general that the number of elderly women will increase enormously in the future. Measurement of the economically active among elderly women will continue to be different and challenging even though new ILO standards are anticipated to improve overall the labour force data for men and women.

Reviewing and commenting on this chapter of the report, the consultative group raised specific issues that should either be incorporated, discussed further or changed in the report. Specific recommendations are the following:

- 1) The use of the term retirement throughout the chapter does not reflect reality as women do not actually retire but continue working even if only staying at home. The concepts utilized are inappropriate for developing countries and were designed for a different purpose.
- 2) The existing system of classification of occupation basically excludes home-making which to a large extent, conceals the real and potential contributions of elderly women within and outside household. A discussion on this should therefore be added in the report. The concept of "discouraged workers" as used in developed countries could also be added since such workers consist disproportionately of older women who in time of recession may not find work.
- 3) It was suggested that a section on elderly workers in the developing countries who are not covered by social security schemes nor pensions be included in the analysis, to which more emphasis to time-use studies and the life cycle approach as tools for obtaining relevant data could be further provided.
- 4) Moreover, it was pointed out that for programme and project formulation and implementation, the real need is for micro-level data which may not be of significant size at the lowest administrative level. It was therefore suggested that countries which have undertaken small surveys or carried out local case studies be encouraged to share their experience in obtaining data suitable for planning using inexpensive methods. Recognizing that national level data represent averages and mask the variations and realities of women's lives at the local level, it was recommended that any description of elderly women's situation should be done within the context of the local economy using community level data. Governments, particularly planning offices, should be made to realize the value of village-level statistics expressed in age-sex categories.

- 5) National statistical offices should define unpaid family workers clearly using a definition that does not classify such workers in terms of hours of work. It was pointed out that the concept and definition of unpaid family workers were two separate issues which should be carefully clarified.
- 6) The dropping of mandatory retirement in certain countries has posed a number of problems. It was suggested that the recent debates on this topic as well as that on early retirement be mentioned in the report.
- 7) Elderly women should be viewed not only as producers but also as consumers. This aspect and its impact on the economy could then be studied not only in terms of who was bearing the costs but how growth of specific industries was stimulated. For example, in health care or in the leisure industry which have a growing clientele of the population in their eighties, it was suggested that consumer expenditure surveys should pay more attention to age and consider households by the age of their members.
- 8) The need for specific training programmes for interviewers and data users was again raised. In this respect, the role of women's bureaux and national machineries on ageing was questioned since the latter have no specific mandate with regard to the elderly.
- 9) A suggestion was made to include part-time employment for elderly women. These jobs are usually low paid and dead-end jobs, but the elderly may, for reasons of tax evasion, retirement and pension limitations, prefer to work part-time. The notion of part-time work is also unclear especially as it relates to household enterprises. Therefore, it was suggested that more surveys on household enterprises be encouraged especially those enterprises where the elderly may be involved. Example cases of exploitation by multi-national corporations of home-based workers engaged in piece work could be provided to this effect.
- 10) In the case of labour force participation, it was emphasized that statistics and data on corporate policies on the employment of older workers, benefits, wages and privileges as well as voluntary and forced exits from the labour market are deemed most important for understanding the behaviour and status of elderly women in the labour force.

11) It was suggested that economic activity for women be re-conceptualized to take into account the realities of women's work.

Women in the Informal Sector

The discussion further highlighted the importance of elderly women's work in the informal sector. In Latin America, for example, the data presented showed an increasing proportion of the elderly in the informal sector by age. Generally, this economic contribution of women, in particular the elderly, is not fully captured. A variety of reasons which, in turn, differ from one country to another, account for this deficiency. One important reason, is the lack of a clear-cut definition of what constitutes the informal sector.

Further, in the face of slowing economic growth and recession, competition from modern-sector and multi-national organizations, the informal sector is the first to be affected seriously, endangering the livelihood of the elderly women. The introduction of technology affects elderly women most specifically. Special job training programmes for the elderly women, therefore, are important as well as information on the types of jobs widely held by, or most suited for the elderly.

Referring back to previous discussions, it was suggested that the topic on the work of elderly women in the informal sector should also be related to the issues on education, migration etc. In urban areas for example, it is important to investigate the status of women coming from the rural areas who are illiterate, dwelling in the slums and ill-equipped to find jobs in the formal sector. The same applies to rural areas particularly for those who are landless and with marginal landholdings. Data gaps that retard full analysis of these issues should therefore be identified.

Statistical data that would allow comparative analyses of elderly women's activities in the rural and urban informal sectors should be compiled and made easily accessible.

Regarding domestic work, it was recommended that this issue should be dealt with separately from the informal sector.

Economic Support and Social Support of Elderly Women

It was emphasized during the discussion that assistance for the elderly is in principle a responsibility shared between the family and the social security systems. In developing countries, most of the elderly rely closely on the support of children and family relatives and more often, live with them in their old age. In other situations, remittances to parents and grand-parents play an important role. Moreover, among the elderly, the single and the childless women as well as those who have not worked before are highly vulnerable and hence depend especially on the support systems such as social security, old age benefits and community support facilities. In the light of rising prices and the rate of inflation, the elderly women face a rapid corrosion in real value of their life-time savings and other income.

Studies on the living conditions of the elderly, particularly of the most vulnerable groups, and the existing support system for their well-being are needed. In addition to compiling statistics and indicators based on the traditional sources of data such as censuses and surveys, other inexpensive ways of compiling data on this matter should be explored. Information on social benefits and eligibility rules for receiving them should be compiled with a view to modifying them in the light of changing economic conditions and local availability of community support system.

Except for the concept of overbenefiting and underbenefiting, all the other issues raised under social support should be consolidated with the previous sections, particularly with living arrangements.

F. Health Status of Elderly Women and Provision of Care

Demographic Factors Influencing Support and Provision of Care

Reviewing the chapter as a whole, it was pointed out that a) support and provision of care for the elderly should not be assumed to be the family's sole preserve especially in the light of changing family size, longer life expectancy and diminishing budgets, hence b) health policy issues should be equally addressed emphasizing the type and impact of health care programmes designed for the elderly.

The discussion also pointed out that illness and disability are two separate concepts which should be addressed more clearly when analyzing the total health of the elderly, in the same way that physical disability should be distinguished from mental disability.

While health issues in general, are being addressed by the World Health Organization (WHO) using a more comprehensive analytical approach, functional inability described as the individuals incapability to carry out activities of the daily living is a subtopic that is relatively more important to the objectives of the current study and thus could be touched upon in the technical report especially as this affected labour force participation and productive activities.

Sample tabulation and data collected on disability, (e.g. in Canada), including the questions administered to respondents to elicit relevant information should be compiled and presented for reference.

A possible indicator that could be easily calculated is the number of hospital beds by age of patient to indicate the prevalence of illness among the elderly. Since age at which one becomes disabled has differing impacts, it was suggested that rehabilitation statistics for the elderly should be collected. Additional data could also be collected on government expenditures on health care for the elderly, causes of death by age and morbidity.

In light of the many aspects of health that could be covered, it was felt that this topic would be a major task by itself, for which the WHO and PAHO could be requested to address. Moreover, it should be mentioned at the very beginning of the technical report that while critical issues would not be treated in detail in the report, the health needs of the elderly would be identified and presented for discussion on data availability.

Following the above recommendations, it was further suggested that the sections on support systems should be merged with the preceding chapter where economic and social support are discussed.

IV. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REVISION OF THE DRAFT REPORT

Some suggestions were forwarded concerning the likelihood of dividing the technical report into two parts. It was agreed that the first part, which is the focus of the technical report currently being reviewed should provide a comprehensive overview and an analysis of the status and situation of elderly women while the second part should provide suggestions on methods of compiling data and indicators on elderly women.

It was strongly emphasized that the second part should also compile and analyse some relevant tables and provide samples of questionnaires used in various national surveys on the elderly, the disabled, etc. The group agreed to this suggestion and stressed to INSTRAW and UNSO the need to have the current technical report published as soon as possible.

It was also suggested that the current technical report should include a glossary of those terms used with commonly agreed definitions.

In the tables used to illustrate certain points, care must be exercised not to give a misleading picture since single country experiences at specific time points may change or vary by country or at different time periods.

Regarding the use of the technical report, it was suggested that it could be a valuable input for the 1995 Women's Conference. The Commission on the Status of Women should be appraised of the results of the Consultative Meeting so that the topic of the elderly women could be included as background documents of the conference. The report of the Consultative Meeting should also be utilized as a catalyst for follow-up meetings to address in detail the development of methodologies to collect data in particular regions.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTION

Statistics and indicators on the situation of elderly women should enable policymakers, analysts, and others to assess changes in the situation of elderly women over time. Towards that end, statistical agencies should be encouraged to utilize adequately the results of the 1990 round of population and housing censuses as well as household surveys and as needed, undertake special household surveys that permit measurement of change on issues relevant to elderly women. Also, administrative statistics should be explored. Depending on the objective, longitudinal, panel and/or cohort studies may be appropriate.

Training and sensitization to critical issues relevant for older women is needed for personnel involved in data collection and use, at various levels including policymakers, planners, statisticians and interviewers. INSTRAW together with UNSO, UNIFEM and INIA should further explore the improvement of methods and classifications systems that will aid in understanding the situation of elderly women. Furthermore, INSTRAW should develop training instruments for this purpose and seek funds to undertake a pilot training course which could be replicated thereafter.

Statistical agencies should be encouraged to publicize widely the available data and make them accessible in machine-readable form datadases at little or no cost. Publication of detailed tabulations were however discouraged.

Ways should be sought to create a new image of elderly women that is relevant to their place in today's rapidly changing societies in all parts of the world. For instance, in highlighting the importance of the traditional caregiving role of elderly women, research should try not to perpetuate stereotype of elderly women solely as caregivers thus limiting their opportunities to contribute to and to participate in society in other meaningful ways.

Independent scientific bodies should be charged with the task of developing (a) methods of assigning value to work of the elderly in the informal sector and (b) recommendations of how these might be included in national accounts.

The national statistical offices and national machineries that exist for the elderly should be involved in addressing the changing concerns of women and their families.

Special attention should be given to qualitative, ethnographic and case studies to complement the work of national statistical offices.

INSTRAW in collaboration with the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat should periodically review the methods and concepts for the collection, analysis and publication of data on ageing women.

Organizations responsible for health such as WHO and PAHO should be requested to address the need for improving concepts, statistics and indicators relevant to analyzing the health of older women. Those indicators that highlight the links between older women's health and their productivity and functional ability should be given special attention. In this regard, it is considered most important that INSTRAW, in collaboration with the relevant UN agencies convenes a consultative meeting on statistics and indicators on the health status of elderly women, highlighting on the issue of functional disabilities.

The Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat should exhibit its work on disability at professional meetings to broaden its dissemination and utilization by the networks on ageing.

Attention of the group was drawn to the UNSO publication on Disability Statistics Compendium published in 1990 which provides national data on 12 major topics about disabled persons and on the work of the United Nations Population Division on the International Estimates of Disability Benefits. It was suggested that countries should make simple projections using the types of data illustrated in the Compendium and review the techniques that the UN Population Division is currently using.

Data should be collected on health benefits of elderly and disabled women and the relationship between them.

National statistical offices are especially urged to constantly look for ways and methods of improving the measurement of economic participation of women, in particular elderly women. To this end, adequate training of census enumerators, more probing questions to elderly women to elicit information on the supply of, and demand for elderly women workers, and on the circumstances and availability for work i.e., part-time work, adequately paying jobs, etc. should be addressed.

The statistics of the group now termed "not economically active population" collected in censuses need to be examined more than hitherto. The existing classifications should be examined and improved as needed for expanded uses concerning the situation of women. Time use studies focusing on elderly women would be useful.

Improved statistical measures and indicators on non-economic and economic participation of elderly women remain so far experimental. Experiences gained towards better methods and related instruments, e.g., survey questionnaires, concepts and definitions adopted, training requirements, should be widely exchanged among countries. UNSO and INSTRAW are urged to promote this exchange through, among other means, separate publications containing country case studies, questionnaires and tabulation schemes.

Present efforts by INSTRAW, UNSO and ILO, among others, should be intensified towards improving statistics on employment status, particularly of the elderly with special attention to the informal sector.

It was also acknowledged that occupations open to women is much narrower than that available to men, and that women are overrepresented in the lowest paying, least prestigious jobs. It was therefore recommended that a general list of jobs (or occupations) in which the elderly women are concentrating should be prepared by INSTRAW and the Statistical Office or other organizations. This list should be supplemented by a similar national list and should be used for organizing training programmes for the elderly as well as in creating a variety of new jobs suited for the elderly.

Further work or research on improving concepts and methodologies for collecting statistics and data on elderly women should constitute the second phase of this endeavour or second volume of the technical report. For the follow-up research and publication, specific attention should be given to the following specific issues:

- 1) Living arrangements of elderly women, headship and composition of households. Present concepts and classification of household and families need to be improved and standardized to portray adequately the role of elderly women.
- 2) Migration and households. Census migration statistics should be exploited further to throw light on migration of the elderly women and the impact of migration on the elderly. Data/information should be gathered on reasons for migration and the conditions of the elderly after migration.
- 3) Widowhood. Age at widowhood and increment-decrement life table should be calculated as useful indicators to study marital union and dissolution. Detailed marital classifications by rural/urban and age groups after 60 should be published.
- 4) Information on educational facilities and programmes for elderly women should also be assembled and disseminated.
- 5) Economic participation of elderly women.
- 6) Existing economic and social support for elderly women.

ANNEX I

Consultative Meeting on Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation of Elderly Women 28-30 May, 1991

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ANNEX II Agenda

Tuesday, 28 May

- 10:00 - 10:30 Opening Remarks
INSTRAW and UNSO
- 10:30 - 11:00 Introduction: Objectives, scope and organization of
the Technical Report "Improving Concepts and
Methods for Statistics and Indicators of
Elderly Women"

INSTRAW Consultant

Elderly Women's Position in Family Formation and Households

- 11:00 - 12:00 Headship and Composition of Households*
- 12:00 - 1:00 Migration and Households
- 1:00 - 3:00 BREAK
- 3:00 - 4:30 Marital/Union Status and Life Cycle Patterns
- 4:30 - 5:30 Measuring Elderly Women's Performance in the
Regular Education System

Wednesday, 29 May

Elderly Women's Economic Activity/Social Support

- 10:00 - 1:00 Measuring and Describing the Actual Supply of
Female Labour
- 1:00 - 2:30 BREAK
- 2:30 - 4:30 Economic Support
- 4:30 - 5:30 Social Support

Thursday, 30 May

Health Status of Elderly Women and Provision of Care

- 10:00 - 11:00 Demographic Factors Influencing Support and Provision of Care
- 11:00 - 1:00 Support Systems
- A. Role of Public Policy
 - B. Role of Family
 - C. Institutional Care
- 1:00 - 2:30 BREAK
- 2:30 - 4:00 Consolidation of recommendations for revision of technical report
- 4:00 - 5:30 Consolidation and adoption of suggestions for follow-up action or further work to improve statistical data on elderly women

INSTRAW



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