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**SEMINAR ON POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUSES
SESSION III**

New approaches to population censuses: the Brazilian case

Submitted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Following the world trend, the demand in Brazil for statistical information is increasingly associated with the need to formulate local government policies. In this respect, the entities that produce government statistics are expected to produce specific, detailed and opportune information. In addition, the high cost of census operations carried out every ten years in the country has been the object of discussions at the time of taking decisions involving budget allocation. In this context, proposals are being sought for an alternative design for the Population Census. The proposals should satisfy the demands of users and, at the same time, should involve a desirable reduction in the cost of producing the Census. The Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística - IBGE has started activities in order to promote the study and evaluation of alternative methodologies, which may be applied to demographic censuses in Brazil.

2. New approaches to Census taking, at the stage of studies, tests or implementation in other countries, especially the United States and France, can constitute a feasible alternative to satisfying the more pressing stakeholders' demands. The possibilities of producing data with a

greater thematic diversity, for disaggregated geographic levels and with an annual frequency, are very attractive.

3. Being aware that the implementation of new methods of census taking requires a deep study and testing phase, in Brazil we are studying the most well known cases of implementation of new approaches. We are also discussing the applicability of these modes in Brazil, especially considering the heterogeneous coverage of Vital Statistics and other administrative registers along the country.

4. In order to plan and implement the next Brazilian population census in an environment of methodological development, IBGE, in partnership with Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática - INEGI (Mexico), organized the First International Meeting on New Methods for Population Censuses in Rio de Janeiro, 13-15 October 2004. The meeting provided a dissemination channel for the French Rolling Census and American Community Survey experiences, with the presence of specialists from both countries, and established itself as a landmark for studies and discussion of the issue in Latin America.

5. Furthermore, IBGE staff attended symposiums and international meetings related to this theme in 2004, and also visited the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE, France) in February 2005. The involvement in the aforementioned activities helped forge the debate about this subject at the IBGE.

6. Due to the complex nature of this task, five different workgroups were created, each one focusing on a relevant aspect of the census activity, defined as follows:

- i) Master Address File;
- ii) Conceptual Design;
- iii) Sampling and Accumulation of Information;
- iv) Infrastructure and Logistics;
- v) Integration of Census and Household Surveys.

7. IBGE and INEGI organized the Second International Meeting on New Methods for Population Censuses, which took place at INEGI (Mexico) on 4-6 July 2005. At that forum were discussed some issues to be considered before the adoption of a new approach.

8. The countries agreed on the necessity of considering the geographic aggregation and the timing of the implementation needed. A main issue was to appoint a country capable of evaluating the sustainability of the project for the long term, and the capacity of the countries to support not only the financial costs, but also the social and political burden. It was also recommended to study statistical methodologies to link data from different sources and the possibility of employing those methodologies to generate annual population estimates.

9. It was suggested to organize multidisciplinary international working groups to study and propose implementation of new approaches adequate to the statistical necessities of each country in a harmonized way. The same working groups already implemented in Brazil were approved.

10. The Third International Meeting on New Methods for Population Censuses will be held in Rio de Janeiro on 29-31 May 2006, in partnership with INEGI from Mexico, to hear about and to discuss the lessons learnt.

11. At the Seminar will be discussed the information generated after implementation of the New French Census and the American Community Survey, and also the experience of the Latin American countries that have already implemented new technologies or methods, such as Colombia and Peru.

12. The topics for the seminar discussion are:

- (i) methodological and practical aspects, such as accumulation of the data;
- (ii) problems faced at implementation; update of the information;
- (iii) use of the results for annual estimates of population for counties and small areas;
- (iv) use of data of traditional enumeration combined with yearly updates from surveys for annual estimates.

13. More than twenty countries from Latin America and the Caribbean are attending the meeting, especially IBGE's partners from Mercosur, Bolivia and Chile because, since the experience of the 2000 round Common Population Census, we have a cooperative commitment, both with respect to harmonization of content and the introduction of new methodologies.

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