

Preparation for the 1999 Population and Housing census:**Responding to changing needs****Mr. B. Batmunkh****Vice Chairman, SSO****1. Introduction**

Mongolia has a long tradition of conducting population census. Statistical data collection, particularly on population and livestock were well known in Mongolia as early as thirteenth century primarily for taxation purposes. In 1918, population and livestock censuses were conducted and in 1922 the arable land area were registered in all local administrative units. Since 1924, when the State Statistical Office of Mongolia was established Mongolia has developed a good population data collection system and infrastructure. Population data sources include the population censuses which have been taken regularly since 1969, civil registration system which have been in existence since 1951, population register which was completed in 1988 and household surveys which have been conducting since 1966.

The State Statistical Office conducted 7 population censuses in Mongolia. The first population census was conducted in 1935 and June 1 was chosen as an enumeration day and accounted 738.8 thousand population. Then in 1940 the enumeration day was October 15. The third population census was conducted as of February 15, 1956 and it was the first scientific census, in respect to its organization and content. Next census was conducted in January 5, 1963 and accounted 1017.1 thousand population. The advantage of this census was that first time there was used primitive computer machine to process the results. Then population censuses were conducted in January 10, 1969 and January 5, 1979. The last population and housing census was conducted in 1989.

2. Current situation of preparation for the next census

Mongolia has a territory of 1.5 million square km. At the end of 1995 the population of Mongolia was 2 million 317 thousand. Population density of Mongolia is 1.4 persons per 1 square km. Population of Mongolia increased by 3.5 times compared with 1921 and about 2.9 times compared with 1940. In 1989 the government adopted a new political system and opened itself to a market economic system. The political and economic transformation from a model of a centrally controlled system to a liberalized one and a market economy is continuing to challenge the Government capability in the collection, processing, analyzing and dissemination of various statistics, particularly, the statistics on population.

Today the Mongolian political and economic situation is changed totally compare with the time of the previous censuses.

The current difficult economical situation of the country will influence in the taking of the forthcoming population census in certain extent. In order to conduct national population census we would face financial problems. As we estimated we will need at least more than 3 million US dollars to conduct population census. Also it is

impossible to use computers and equipment that currently are using at the SSOM in the forthcoming census because these would be too old and do not have sufficient capacity to process census materials. Therefore, today it is difficult to talk about the techniques and technologies that would be used in the forthcoming census.

3. Responding to changing needs

3.1 *The changed environment*

In Mongolia the 1999 Population and housing census would be conducted in the entirely changed new environment. The former centrally planned economy system was providing much more favorable environment for comprising whole population in the census, because almost all ownership was under state and the management was centralized. The internal migration was under strict control of government and there were less internal migration. Similarly, the international migration was limited because the country's economy was almost closed and there were few foreigners who were living in Mongolia. During these time there was no idea about street children and homeless population. Due to the economic difficulties the migration from rural areas into cities is increasing steadily. Similarly, for the last several years the number of foreigners who is living in Mongolia is increasing besides that the number foreigners who live illegally in Mongolia is going up too. So, it means that both internal migration and international migration is increasing. Now the poverty is growing very fast, therefore there the number of homeless population and street children is rising sharply.

Currently, during the time of the transition period it is expected that we would face several difficulties in order to comprise whole population in the census. Recently the government is approved the Law on privatization of apartments owned by state. The privatization will start since January 1, 1997. According to this law the privatization should be completed within two years. There would rise specific problems about accounting of privatized apartments.

3.2 *Planning for 1999 Population and Housing Census*

There is a need to consider the new situation that has come up recently for the preparation and planning forthcoming census. It will influence directly for the success, quality and results of census taking. In the new environment the detailed planning of each step and activity of the census conducting would be preliminary circumstances for successful census taking. The planning and preparation for the forthcoming census needs much more time than that we have expected. According to the recommendations of UN agencies it is necessary to start preparation and planning for population census three years apart the time of actual enumeration, and I think that it is quite practical. There are several questions to be emphasized and to be solved for the forthcoming census planning in Mongolia.

The first one is the legal basis for conducting population and housing census. During the centrally planned economy the administrative measures were strong and the government decisions were just like the law. Now, in the new democratic environment that works for the humans right it is necessary to legitimate enumeration activities, like participation of individuals in population and housing census, responsibility to answer the questions and to give a right for the enumerators to be entered into the

household etc. Therefore we are preparing to make some changes in the law on statistical.

The second one is to make some changes in the several classifications which are going to be used in population and housing census. There has been taking several changes in the Mongolian territorial and administrative classification since last population and housing census. The concept of cities has been changed. According to it several cities were abolished and same time new cities established.

The another important question is confidentiality of individuals information that collected from the census. There is a need to give more attention to this question in the new environment. Therefore the question of confidentiality is provided in the law on individual confidentiality as well as on statistics and it is necessary to organize all activities providing attention of confidentiality in the each step of census taking. When we are planning for the next census there is coming a need to develop detailed planning for each step of census taking such as design census questionnaires, developing a methodology how to comprise whole population in the census, estimation of finance and budget for census taking, establish enumeration unit, identify method of enumeration, choose enumerators and supervisors and train them, develop map, control census taking process, fulfill the questioners as much as right and complete, process census data, develop census output tables, conduct pilot census and publicity of census taking.

3.4 Revisions in the census questionnaire

a. Questionnaire for the previous censuses

The population census content of 1969, 1979 and 1989 censuses were similar with those of the member countries of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Especially, the program of 1989 population census was very much similar with the programs of the former Soviet Union population census content which conducted in 1989. In addition the population related part of the questionnaire for 1979 and 1989 population and housing censuses were almost similar with each other.

This can be proved by the following table:

Questions for 1979, 1989 population and housing censuses

Questions	1979	1989
1. Relationship to the head of the household	+	+
2. Permanent resident -1	+	+
Temporary absent -2	+	+
Temporary resident -3	+	+
For temporary resident permanent address:	-	+
Province (city)	-	+
Village (district)	-	+
3. Sex: male - 1, female - 2	+	+
4. Date of birth: year month ... date, age	+	+
Province (city)	+	+
Village (district)	+	+
5. Nationality	+	+
6. Citizenship	+	+
7. Establishment , School	+	+
8. Kind of work	+	+

9. Social origin	+	+
10. Social group	+	+
11. Sources of living (income)	+	+
12. Education	+	+
13. Occupation	+	+
14. Marital status	+	+
15. Number of children ever born	+	+
of which: currently alive (related to female population only)	+	+

1979 Population and housing census questionnaire was designed in both sides of single paper slipper, the front side of questionnaire was for population census and the back side was for housing census. 1989 Population and housing census questionnaire was improved. The questionnaire was divided into two separate pages, questions for population census was given in the one separate page and the questions for housing was given in another separate page. It was more convenient to fill up the questionnaires.

b. The revisions of the census questionnaire

Due to the political and economic changes in the society of Mongolia the need to revise the questionnaire for 1999 population and housing census has been risen. In Mongolia the single party system with communist ideology has been destroyed and the multi-party one was established. There was a great influence of communist ideas to the population and housing census taking, especially in its contents. For example, in previous censuses we used to ask about "social origin" and there were five possible alternatives to answer that question. These were "blue worker", "officer-employee", "livestock breeder", "member of cooperatives" and "other". On the basis of this question the social classes and groups were analyzed. During the former communist system the question of social origin was one of the important questions. The person who was originated from "blue worker" or "breeders" family had a better chance to improve his/ her career and mostly the members of the communist party were originated from "blue workers" and "breeders" family. This is the one of the examples how the political idea influenced in the society and individuals. Nowadays it is clear that this kind of the questions will be excluded from the census content.

Currently the primary principle for the questionnaire design will be unification with international standard definitions and methodology. Some indicators used in the former centrally planned economy are not appropriate any more. We considered that results of the census should be comparable with respective indicators of other countries. In addition we should take into account the principle of consistency of results with previous censuses data series.

In order to suit to the international standards we have to adopt a number of definitions, indicators and classifications. For this purpose we study carefully the recommendations of the UNFPA and other UN agencies. Previously we followed in our work the CMEA recommended indicators and methodology. Therefore, to follow UN instructions is a new problem. In our opinion firstly we have to establish the data coverage in accordance with the international standards indicators in the following

areas such as education, employment status, occupation, specific population group, industry and etc.

In our previous censuses the education level was classified as follows:

- primary (1-4 classes),
- non-completed secondary (graduated 8 classes),
- completed secondary (graduated 10 classes),
- special secondary (professional and vocational training institutions),
- higher.

Nowadays the educational level started classify according to the UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education (ISCE):

- no schooling,
- first level of education,
- second level of education,
- third level of education.

In addition every level is subdivided into the non-completed and completed. This is only one example of adoption of the international standards.

In 1999 population and housing census our country will compile the occupational statistics in accordance with the revised International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88).

From this it is clear that there is an urgent need to estimate our indicators and terms in accordance with the international standards.

Since all these indicators and terms have not been practiced before, we are facing many problems. Therefore more greater emphasis has been placed to the staff training and interpretation of statistics.

The gender sensitive statistics have not developed yet sufficiently and we have not enough information in this area. Considering this point we are planning to conduct separate study on this issue on the basis of the census results. Also it will be one of the steps to implement the address of the Conference 'Population and development' held in Cairo in September of 1994 to the Governments of countries. Besides that this will play a crucial role in the evaluation of the Nairobi Conference strategical objectives about improvement of women's status up to 2000.

For the purpose of developing statistics on women's situation the following questions will be included in the census questionnaire: sex, age, relationship to the head of household, marital status, educational attainment and attendance, occupation, industry, employment status, fertility and etc. Also it is planned to conduct a sample survey among women about their reproductive behavior. It will cover female population in the age of 15-49. The specific address part will be omitted and confidentiality will be kept. This form will include the following questions: financial situation (income), age of marriage, number of children ever born, age of child birth, contraceptive practice, if yes methods of contraceptive, number of abortions, places of abortions and conditions of performance, number of still births, attendance of the prenatal medical care, family planning and desired number of children and etc. Also we are planning to include some

questions about family violence. We hope that this survey will provide more detailed information on women's situation.

The census results should fulfill the society's demand for information to some extent. In order to meet the user's demand we will organize seminars and workshops calling all producers and users of population statistics and will reflect user's and demographer's suggestions and comments in the census questionnaire.

Currently Mongolia is experiencing the transitional period and we are facing many problems with relation to it such as social concerns of population, unemployment and poverty. Mongolian Government places great attention to those population problems. In this regard we are planning to include some new questions in 1999 population and housing census content. For example, sources of income, its size, some additional information in the employment status section.

During last 5 years different religious flows have been entering into Mongolian society. Previously, a majority of Mongolian people were experienced the Buddhism, few ethnic groups was used to practice the Muslim. Nowadays in addition to these two the Christos and other flows have being spread up widely. So the question about religious practice might be included in the questionnaire.

It is important to consider the following criteria for the questions that would be asked in the census:

1. Legal justification of the questions to be asked,
2. Need for the national planning and management,
3. Meet a demand of the local users,
4. Possibility to collect this data from other sources (sample survey, administrative records),
5. Need to collect this data from small area and group of population,
6. Presence of particular question in the previous questionnaire,
7. Long and unclear way of asking the questions and inconsistency with others,
8. To make the questionnaire easy to fill up and code
9. To make sure that the particular question would give reliable and useful data testing the questionnaire during the pilot census and update them.

Same time we have to consider a point that, when the questionnaire is too difficult to fill up and there are too many questions, it decreases the overall quality of the census results and rises problems in data analysis.

3.5 Analysis and dissemination of census data.

The population census is widely regarded as an important and major source of data for fundamental and effective development planning, policy formulation and action programmes. The census is an important source of data on the size, distribution and composition of the population of a country and for its geographic, administrative units and social groups. The population and housing censuses together with other sources

of data, such as vital registration and household surveys constitute an integrated system of statistics in modern societies.

Right after the 1989 Population and housing census the Demographic laboratory was established at the State Statistical Office with 4-5 officers in order to maintain permanent demographic analyses. The UNFPA has been providing support in order to improve the physical and professional capacity of the Demographic laboratory.

On the basis of the 1989 population and housing census data the projection of Mongolian population up to 2019 was developed. During the last 4 years several country level papers and monographs have been prepared by this Demographic laboratory. These are:

- Fertility decline in Mongolia: Trends, policies and explanations
- Projections of the national population by age group and sex, 1989-2019.
- Population handbook
- Urbanization and urban population distribution in Mongolia
- Demographic Analysis of Mortality: Evaluation of Data, Construction of life tables and explanations
- Women and children of Mongolia.

We have to be well prepared in advance to make advanced demographic analyses based on 1999 Population and housing census results. For the intercensal period we have not been able to calculate demographic indicators at the province level. The results from the previous censuses show that there was a difficulty to make analyses at the province level because the indicators were already compiled up to country level.

One of the major factors for promoting population census data utilization is effective communication of the producers of statistics with existing and potential users at all stages of the census, such as in the planning and steering committees, in designing the questionnaire and in planning the content and format of tabulations.

4. Conclusion

Since 1990 many political and economic changes have been taken place in Mongolia. They are following by the transitional period from a centrally planned economy to a market oriented one. We are facing a number of economic difficulties. Also there is a lack of financial resources for 1999 population and housing census conducting in Mongolia.

Compare to our previous experience forthcoming census will be carried out in the new and more difficult conditions. Also there is a need to change an overall census planning process and questionnaire design. Our pervious censuses were based on indicators, terms and classifications adopted by the CMEA countries. Now in order to provide a comparability with other countries we have to follow the international standard indicators, methodology and classifications. Due to the economic difficulties the living standard of population has been decreasing steadily. Great emphasis was given to the new social issues such as poverty and unemployment. In this regard we are planning to include in our questionnaire the indicators on income source, income

size, employment status, specific questions for population do not engaged in any activity.

Beside the above mentioned questions that we are planning include in the questionnaire we are planning to conduct a sample survey among women on their reproductive behaviour. After data collection special attention will be given to the process of data dissemination and research study of its results. We are designing 1999 census format of tabulation in such way that will provide more opportunity for the spatial analysis.

To conclude I would like to point out that there will be improvement of the overall quality of census conducting with special attention to data dissemination and research analysis of results.

- Women and children of Mongolia
- Demographic Analysis of Mortality, Evaluation of Data, Construction of life tables
- Urbanization and urban population distribution in Mongolia
- Population handbook
- Projections of the national population by age group and sex, 1989-2019
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We have to be well prepared in advance to make advance demographic analysis based on 1999 population and housing census results. For the interested period we have not been able to calculate demographic indicators at the province level. The results from the previous census show that there was a difficulty to make any result. The main reason for this was the indication, which was not complete at the county level.

One of the major factors for promoting population census data utilization is effective communication of the products of census to the public and potential users. At the stage of planning and in planning the content and format of tabulation questionnaire and in planning the content and format of tabulation.

4 Conclusion

Since 1989, when political and economic changes took place in Mongolia, they are following the transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. We are facing a number of serious difficulties. One of them is lack of financial resources for conducting population and housing census. Mongolia

Compare to our present economic condition, there will be a great change in the new and more difficult condition. There is a need to change the census format, in planning process and questionnaire design. Our previous census was based on industrial, service and classification, which is not suitable for the new condition. To provide a new quality with other countries we have to follow the international standard industrial methodology and classification. Due to the economic difficulties the living standard of population has been decreasing slowly. Great emphasis was given to the new census results with poverty and unemployment. In the recent years planning to include in the questionnaire the indicators of income source, poverty