SUMMARY

This document provides the Governing Council with a comprehensive overview of UNFPA regional assistance to the Asia and the Pacific area in recent years as well as the specifics of the proposed regional programme for the period 1988-1991, as requested by the Council at its thirty-fourth session in decision 87/30 I, paragraph 18. It surveys the work of the regional advisers, executing agencies and various projects and outlines the UNFPA strategy for regional activities in this area for the period 1988-1991.
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I. AN OVERVIEW OF THE UNFPA-FUNDED REGIONAL PROGRAMME

1. The main objectives of UNFPA-supported regional programmes and projects in the Asia and Pacific region are: (a) to provide technical and managerial support for programmes and projects at the country level; and (b) to identify emerging population issues and assist countries in developing as well as implementing strategies to address them. To this end, in recent years the Fund has been supporting and encouraging the use of regional advisory teams to provide technical support to countries of the region. The technical inputs provided through these teams have, over the years, come to take the place of long-term resident advisers in most countries. This approach has proved to be effectual as well as cost-effective. Moreover, the use of these teams, supplemented by the occasional use of short-term consultancies and coupled with relevant training efforts, has also proved to be more conducive to the development of national capabilities than has the appointment of long-term advisers, and in most instances is preferred by Governments. In fact, in the past four years, technical backstopping has consistently amounted to 50 per cent of UNFPA regional assistance (see table 1).

Table 1. UNFPA-funded regional programmes in Asia and the Pacific, 1984-1987, by functional category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional category</th>
<th>Amount ($US millions)</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical backstopping</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information exchange and dissemination</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>21.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNFPA.

2. The regional advisers are actively involved in population needs assessment, programme development and project formulation in the individual countries of the region. During the implementation phase, they provide technical support, monitor progress and conduct periodic evaluation of projects. They also play a critical role in the development of innovative methodologies and materials and in helping countries to adapt technologies to local needs. Moreover, they continue to play an
important role in creating and sustaining the commitment of countries to address population issues. Intercountry seminars, workshops and meetings conducted by the regional teams serve as vehicles for the training of trainers, for the exchange of information, for the sharing of experience, and for the examination of emerging issues in the region. The importance of training in the regional programme is evidenced by the fact that nearly 14 per cent of the regional budget in the past four years was allocated to this component.

3. A breakdown of the regional programme for the past four years by work-plan category is shown in table 2. The hierarchy of allocations by category has remained fairly consistent over time with family planning and maternal and child health (FP/MCH) programmes and information, education and communication (IEC) programmes accounting for well over 60 per cent of annual budgets. Programmes in population research and policy development have also received a considerable proportion of UNFPA assistance, some 27.2 per cent of the total. Significantly smaller amounts have gone to the other sectors.

Table 2. UNFPA-funded regional programmes in Asia and the Pacific, 1984-1987, by work-plan category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work-plan category</th>
<th>Amount ($US millions)</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family planning and maternal and child health</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, education and communication</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic data collection</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population research and policy development a/</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special programmes and multisector activities</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNFPA.

a/ This includes work-plan categories 200 Population Dynamics, 300 formulation and evaluation of population policies and programmes, and 400 implementation of policies.
4. Table 3 shows the distribution of funds allocated by executing agency. The largest recipient has been the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) through which UNFPA supported regional advisory services, the activities of the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), a regional population information centre and data bank, and research relating to population trends, population and development planning and operational aspects of family planning programmes. Activities funded through non-governmental organizations (NGOs), collectively accounting for over 21 per cent of the total, relate mainly to policy formulation and evaluation involving intergovernmental bodies and to awareness creation, such as the recent conference on population and development in medium-sized cities, held in Kobe, Japan, in August 1987.

5. Owing to the rather large proportion of activities executed by United Nations agencies and organizations (78.8 per cent), it is useful to review some of the UNFPA-funded activities executed through these agencies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executing agency</th>
<th>Amount ($US millions)</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Labour Organisation (ILO)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Health Organization (WHO)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Development Programme, Office for Projects Execution (UNDP/OPE) a/</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental organizations</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>21.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNFPA.

a/ Effective 1 March 1988 the name of the UNDP Office for Projects Execution (OPE) was changed to the UNDP Office for Projects Services (OPS).
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

6. Through ESCAP, UNFPA has supported regional advisory services in population censuses and surveys and in data processing, mainly in the installation of software packages and the use of equipment for census data processing. As a direct impact of the work of the two ESCAP advisers in this area, every country in the region is expected to conduct a population census during the 1986-1995 census decade. The status of civil registration and vital statistics in the region was examined in two intercountry seminars held in the past four years, one of which dealt exclusively with the countries and territories of the Pacific region. Two working group meetings also took place to review the relevance of the 1980 recommendations for population and housing censuses to the 1990 round of censuses as well as to specific data needs on such groups as women, youth, etc. Participants at the meeting on Pacific countries and territories suggested that a common core census questionnaire be developed for use by each island country or territory, with appropriate modification to accommodate local circumstances. ESCAP collaborated closely with the South Pacific Commission in its work in the collection, analysis and dissemination of demographic data, and recently regular co-ordination meetings have been instituted.

7. The two largest UNFPA-funded projects executed by ESCAP are the fellowship programme at IIPS (Bombay, India) and the support of the Asia-Pacific Population Information Network and its national centres. The fellowship programme has provided short-term training on demography for at least 15 persons from the region each year and has been very useful in building up a cadre of trained persons in population and related matters, particularly in those countries in which national training facilities and expertise were limited. Moreover, IIPS is the only available regional resource for providing basic training in population studies. The second project has been successful in meeting its objectives by providing technical assistance to national population information centres; co-ordinating the activities of the 13 centres that make up the Asia-Pacific Population Information Network; and developing regional data bank services and information support for countries through technical information services and publications. As a result of the publication in 1986 of a directory of current research in the region, it became apparent that there was inadequate utilization of such data and research findings in population policy formulation/evaluation and programme implementation. Considerable effort continues to be needed to promote the effective management of information in the region and the continued synthesis and dissemination of information on intercountry activities. In addition, technical assistance in population information should be extended to the Pacific island countries and territories.

8. ESCAP has also served as executing agency for several research activities including (a) an in-depth analysis of census and survey data on internal migration data in selected countries; (b) a comparative study of the complex interrelationship between demographic and economic variables; (c) development of an analytical framework for population and development research and planning; (d) a study on international migration policy in the Asia and the Pacific region; (e) studies on the impact of national family planning programmes; (f) a study of organizational issues in community participation in national family planning...
programmes; and (g) a study to ascertain family planning workers' knowledge of and attitudes towards contraceptive methods. In addition, monographs on the population situation in selected countries were prepared, and training in the use of micro-computers for demographic analysis and family planning programme evaluation was conducted.

International Labour Organisation

9. The UNFPA-funded activities of the regional ILO Labour and Population Team for Asia and the Pacific (LAPTAP) have focused on promoting and implementing population education and family welfare programmes through workers' and employers' institutions within the organized sector and on enhancing the integration of population factors and concerns into development planning at the national level. The team's education and motivational work on family welfare, which complements ILO's abiding concern for improving the working and living conditions of workers, has effectively utilized ILO's links with employers' and workers' organizations covering industrial enterprises and plantations in the region.

10. As part of its efforts to involve labour-sector institutions in population activities, LAPTAP has assisted Governments in identifying specific obstacles that might impede such involvement. Two studies, both of which were carried out in India, are prime examples: one on the compatibility of existing labour legislation with the national population policy, completed in 1984; the other, currently under way, to advise the Government on a programme for comprehensive health and welfare coverage in the organized sector. Work along these lines also needs to be initiated in other countries in the region in the coming years. These types of studies are intended to improve the design and implementation of operational projects in the area of population education and family welfare.

11. LAPTAP has developed and backstopped several country projects aimed at enhancing the capability of national planning agencies to undertake comprehensive population, human resources and development planning. As this aspect of the LAPTAP programme is relatively new there is still much to be done. Top-level decision makers in some countries still lack adequate understanding of the importance of integrated population-development planning. In addition, both financial and technical support are needed in the areas of training, development and application of methodologies for planning, creation of institutional bases and formulation of harmonious population and development policies.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

12. Until 1986, technical backstopping from FAO at the regional level was provided by one person. This UNFPA-funded regional adviser was involved in needs assessments, project formulation, technical support during implementation, project evaluation as well as administrative support of FAO-executed projects funded by UNFPA. Due to the increasing volume of work, particularly specific efforts directed at rural women, a second adviser was appointed in early 1986. As and when possible, the advisers also provided technical inputs to FAO's own projects in order to integrate population elements into project activities, in particular with respect to project design and preparations for workshops. Owing to limited human
resources, especially before 1986, not as much attention was given to integrated macro-level planning as was considered necessary. As a result, there are gaps in the development of methodology that will require attention in the immediate future. In addition, there is a continuing need for more conceptual thinking in the area of integrated action programmes, particularly with regard to linking income generation with family planning.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

13. As a direct result of the work of the regional team on population education supported by UNFPA through UNESCO, 25 countries in the Asia and Pacific region have launched population education programmes. Technical inputs to these programmes are provided solely through the regional team, and there is no resident adviser at the country level having this area of expertise. Over the past four years, the regional team has been active in promoting awareness of population education among key education officials in countries in the region as well as in organizing study visits for educators to or from other regions. In addition to backstopping a number of country projects initiated in the early 1980s, members of the team participated in eight UNFPA needs assessment missions and formulated new projects in Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Thailand and Viet Nam. Workshops organized by the team to develop curricula have resulted in the preparation and publication of many innovative materials. Furthermore, over 1,700 teachers and key national personnel were trained by the team in national training programmes, and another 125 people received training through regional activities. Five countries - Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Viet Nam and Nigeria - were assisted in streamlining their population education documentation centres and in training staff for the centres. Assistance was also provided for building up a population education information resource base including the establishment of mobile population education libraries.

14. In terms of the production of educational materials, the team has developed core messages in population education and sample learning experiences for use in both formal and non-formal settings. Prototype designs for evaluation work and research instruments were also developed, as were prototype curricular materials for special interest groups. These materials were all developed within the context of regional workshops with the participation of national project staff. A regional workshop on the cost effectiveness of different training modalities was organized in 1987. The team facilitated the flow of population education materials within the region through its information dissemination service and information repackaging into newsletters, abstracts, bibliographies, booklets and manuals. Librarians and documentalists from 12 countries have been trained in the past four years.

World Health Organization

15. Over the years, the UNFPA-funded team at WHO's South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO) has developed family health projects not only in countries with strong population policies but also in countries such as Bhutan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Maldives and Mongolia which have a more MCH-based approach. A workshop attended by representatives from the Governments of countries in the SEARO
region and from UNFPA and WHO was held in 1984 to define the priority areas of FP/MCH work in the SEARO region. Accordingly, the team has focused its efforts in backstopping countries with weaker health infrastructures. Efforts have been made to strengthen FP/MCH information systems in countries such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Research studies on maternal mortality in Nepal and India were supported in collaboration with WHO headquarters as was the study of maternal, infant and young child mortality and morbidity in Burma. The team also assisted in the improvement of the quality of voluntary sterilization services in Bangladesh and assisted in base-line surveys. Current literature on advances in modern contraceptives was disseminated widely.

16. In 1986, a UNFPA evaluation identified some deficiencies in in-service training curricula in the area of FP/MCH, particularly with regard to training of trainers, application of training methodology and quality of training materials. The SEARO team envisages reviewing the training curricula and materials of health workers in FP/MCH, with special focus on traditional birth attendants (TBAs). This will be conducted in collaboration with UNICEF and national authorities, especially in countries in which TBAs practise widely. Emphasis will be put on the importance of risk factors for early referral and on safe delivery practices.

17. The regional team funded by UNFPA at WHO's Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) has extended technical and managerial back-up services to some 25 projects implemented in 16 countries. A co-ordination meeting attended by representatives from Governments of countries in the WPRO region and from UNFPA and WHO took place in early 1985 to assess FP/MCH needs in the WPRO region and identify priority areas of attention. Efforts of the team have contributed significantly to the gains made in the area of FP/MCH in the countries of the region covered by WPRO. The infant mortality rate has declined dramatically; a downward trend has been perceived in the regional fertility level; and a steady increase in contraceptive use has been observed in many countries. Despite these gains, however, a large proportion of pregnancies and deliveries still remain unattended by trained personnel, and many women requiring life-saving obstetrical care do not have access to it. Inadequate technical and management resources in FP/MCH programmes at the country level is one of the main problems adversely affecting programme implementation and impact. In some instances, this is combined with the absence of a strong political commitment in addressing population problems. In addition, for religious or cultural reasons, the subjects of sexuality and human reproduction continue to be sensitive issues in some countries. Lack of reliable data both with respect to indicators as well as service statistics is an additional constraint to effective programme delivery.

18. The WPRO team collaborated closely with WHO headquarters in organizing a workshop on the integration of an MCH/FP information system in support of the delivery of primary health care in the South Pacific and another workshop in Papua New Guinea on application of the home-based maternal record (an abbreviated personal history regarding pregnancies, births and so forth). The team's technical assistance efforts have focused largely on the island countries and territories in the South Pacific where health infrastructures are weak and local resources limited and on such least developed countries as the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam.
II. PROPOSED UNFPA STRATEGY FOR 1988-1991

19. Support of country programmes remains the guiding principle and overall objective for the proposed regional programmes for the period 1988-1991. In this connexion, the principal modality to implement this will continue to be the various regional advisory teams, which will help to meet the essential needs of countries of the region for technical backstopping in such areas as research and analysis of issues and trends; development of methodologies, curricula and prototype materials; training of trainers; and dissemination of information. In addition, these teams will continue to play an important role in drawing attention to emerging population issues in the region and in reinforcing on a continuous basis the commitment of policy makers and decision makers to population.

20. There are specific issues that will be highlighted in the work of the regional advisers and in other regional activities in the four-year period. These are:

(a) Building up national capabilities in the collection and processing of population data to ensure the generation of quality data in the 1990 round of population censuses;

(b) Strengthening national capabilities in demographic analysis for policy formulation and evaluation;

(c) Broadening the concept of population policies among policy makers to promote and ensure the integration of population factors, including fertility changes and other demographic processes, into all macro-level national planning;

(d) Developing strategies to address issues related to increasing urbanization, adolescent sexuality/fertility and the full integration of women into the mainstream of development efforts;

(e) Improving the effectiveness and quality of services of family planning programmes.

21. In programming and monitoring the implementation of regional activities in the next four years, UNFPA will pay particular attention to promoting collaborative arrangements among the various executing agencies as well as between these and competent regional and national institutions and bodies.

III. PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR 1988-1991

22. The Executive Director proposes to allocate $27.6 million to regional programmes in Asia and the Pacific over the period 1988-1991. Table 4 presents the breakdown by functional category of this amount. Some 66 per cent of proposed programmed allocations will support technical backstopping activities, principally through regional advisory services. Training programmes and information exchange and dissemination activities will receive about 15 per cent and 14 per cent respectively. At the moment, just under 5 per cent has programmed for research projects, although it is expected that more issues will emerge that should be...
studied on a comparative basis at the regional level, particularly in the second half of the four-year period. It should be noted that some 1.8 per cent of the total amount proposed for regional programmes in the next four years has not been programmed, with the major portion of unprogrammed funds being available in 1990 and 1991. This will make it possible for the programme to continue responding to country needs as they emerge. In addition, as the findings of ongoing research activities become available, new areas for follow-up action at the regional level may be identified.

Table 4. UNFPA-funded regional programmes in Asia and the Pacific, 1988-1991, by functional category

<table>
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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical backstopping</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information exchange and dissemination</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprogrammed reserve</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNFPA.

23. The distribution of the proposed regional programme by work-plan category is shown in Table 5. Information, education and communication programmes will receive the largest share of programmed allocations ($10.2 million, or 37.6 per cent), followed by family planning programmes (24.3 per cent). This is due to recognition of the need to strengthen communication support of population programmes with a view to improving their effectiveness. In addition, the need for technical support of population education programmes is expected to grow, particularly as more and more countries initiate activities in this area and the practice of not providing resident advisers continues.
Table 5. UNFPA-funded regional programmes in Asia and the Pacific, 1988-1991, by work-plan category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family planning/MCH</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, education and communication</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic data collection</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population research and policy development a/</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special programmes and multisectoral activities</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprogrammed reserve</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNFPA.

a/ This includes work-plan categories 200 Population Dynamics, 300 formulation and evaluation of population policies and programmes, and 400 implementation of policies.

24. Inputs to family planning programmes will support mainly advisory services. The fact that this work-plan category will receive substantially less resources than information, education and communication programmes is not an indication of low priority but rather reflects the fact that development of methodology in the area of family planning tends to occur at the interregional level and that training activities are often undertaken within the framework of country programmes and projects.

25. The proposed regional programme for Asia and the Pacific is outlined below by sector. These proposals should be viewed with the background that regional programmes in this region have to respond to the needs of countries of very different sizes and with different population problems and policies. On the one hand, there is China with a population of over 1 billion and on the other there is Tuvalu with less than 10,000 people. Although according to United Nations projections, the annual rates of population growth for the period 1988-1990 in the various subregions do not show very significant differences, closer examination of other indicators reveal remarkable disparities. For example, fertility rates range...
from 2.8 per cent in East Asia to 3.5 per cent in South-East Asia, to 4.1 per cent in southern Asia, with most estimates for individual countries of southern Asia at 5.5 per cent or higher. Infant mortality rates range from 24 per 1,000 live births in East Asia to 74 per 1,000 live births in south-eastern Asia, to 105 per 1,000 live births in southern Asia, with the highest individual estimate being 183 per 1,000 live births in Afghanistan. Average life expectancy for the region as a whole is estimated at 61.1 years, but in much of southern Asia it is estimated at less than 50 years, as, for example, in Bangladesh (49.6 years) and in Nepal (47.9 years). In addition, the differences among countries of the region with respect to perceptions of population problems as well as years of experience in formulating and implementing population programmes must also be taken into account.

Family planning and maternal and child health programmes

26. The Executive Director considers the two regional teams based in SEARO and WPRO to be effective mechanisms for providing technical inputs to countries, with a view to building national capability in the management of FP/MCH programmes. Therefore, continued support is recommended to maintain two professional posts in SEARO and four professional posts in WPRO, of which one will be stationed in Suva, Fiji. In the SEARO region, countries that will require particular attention include Bhutan, Burma, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Maldives and Mongolia; in the WPRO region, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam and the island states and territories in the South Pacific will require substantial technical support in FP/MCH. In terms of the composition of the regional teams, the guiding principle will be that they be staffed by FP/MCH "generalists" who, inter alia, will identify the needs of countries for specialist inputs and when these inputs should be made. Such requirements by countries for specialist services will then be met through consultants funded from country programmes.

27. As part of their technical backstopping of country programmes, the various UNFPA-supported medical personnel of SEARO and WPRO will provide training support in the development, adaptation and application of appropriate FP/MCH technologies in the countries they serve. In addition, they will provide continuing supervision and support in the development and use of training methods and materials for FP/MCH health workers. Specifically, a multi-country review of training programmes in voluntary laparoscopic sterilization, minilap and vasectomy will be conducted in the SEARO region during the programme period. Particular attention will be paid in these efforts to the concerns of women and their involvement as service providers. As stated above, one of the main thrusts of the regional programme in the next four years is to improve the effectiveness of family planning programmes. UNFPA support is therefore proposed for training to sharpen different evaluative and managerial skills as well as efforts to improve information systems and programme planning. Specifically, the following regional training activities are recommended for support:

(a) Training in the use of micro-computers for programme monitoring and evaluation;

(b) Training in programme supervision and evaluation for women in mid- to senior-level management positions in population and women-related development programmes;
28. With a view to improving the planning and management of family planning programmes, a multi-country study of the accessibility of the various contraceptive methods is proposed. This study will provide data beyond conventional contraceptive prevalence surveys, examining as well the difficulty of access to specific methods. This will improve country programme planning by ensuring the availability of a good mix of contraceptives, which should in turn help to increase acceptance. In addition, support is also recommended for a multi-country operational research effort to improve management information systems in family planning programmes. The need for sound management information systems has been expressed by most countries with large national family planning programmes. This project is expected to yield guidelines, instruments and training curricula for improving information systems so that family planning programme managers can have easy access to accurate information and feedback on which to base their decisions.

29. During the next four years, it is recommended that particular attention be paid at the intercountry level to two major issues: adolescent sexuality and fertility; and improvement of the coverage and quality of maternal health care. The first subject remains a sensitive one in many parts of the region and has yet to receive widespread official recognition as a problem. At the same time, it is gaining significance as both a health and a demographic problem. Therefore, there is a need to identify the health and demographic problems that ensue from adolescent sexuality, as well as to develop strategies to address them. In this connection, Governments need to be encouraged to recognize adolescent sexuality/fertility as a problem. The regional advisers can play an important role in creating awareness in this regard. They should also develop, in collaboration with WHO headquarters, appropriate educational materials and techniques that can be adapted for use at the country level.

30. The second issue, the improvement of the coverage and quality of maternal health care, is in response to the call for action of the International Safe Motherhood Conference co-sponsored by the World Bank, WHO and UNFPA and held at Nairobi, Kenya, in February 1987. In this regard, reduction of maternal mortality remains a priority and family planning an integral part of efforts to achieve this reduction. The low status of women in many countries of the region has hampered their access to quality health care, and a concerted effort is needed to ensure that national FP/MCH programmes are developed which take into account women's needs and which are designed to improve women's active participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of such programmes. In some countries which are pressured by high population growth, more emphasis has been put on family planning than on MCH, but there is increasing recognition of the need to give equal importance to MCH along with family planning. As a result, there is a need to strengthen the integration of FP/MCH services to help reduce maternal and infant mortality and to generate adequate data for overall and long-range planning and sound programme management.
Information, education and communication

31. A major need in national population programmes in the region is the establishment of linkages and better correlation between service delivery and communication activities. Efforts are needed to update and reorient, as appropriate, population communication strategies. To this end, UNFPA will support a regional adviser to provide technical assistance to countries of the region in the area of population communication. Initially the adviser will assess existing population communication programmes and their relevance to service programmes with a view to assisting Governments in the development of strategies and plans for action in the future. Particular attention will be paid to strengthening the research element in population communication programmes. This project will be executed and backstopped by UNESCO.

32. The Fund will continue to support training courses organized by the Asia-Pacific Institute of Broadcasting and Development for mass media personnel to strengthen their abilities to integrate population content into their work. These courses are unique and help to fill an important gap in efforts to keep population issues in the public eye and to further people's understanding of the impact of population processes on development in general and on local economies in particular.

33. The regional population information centre and data bank at ESCAP will continue to require UNFPA support. Although significant progress has been made in assisting countries of the region to establish and maintain national population information centres, the demand for UNFPA support remains strong, to assist not only in establishing new centres but also in improving technical skills in the management and utilization of population information systems. In addition to its information dissemination and clearinghouse functions, ESCAP conducts a regular training programme to update and exchange technologies between and among national centre staffs. Moreover, the regional centre has been active in networking with institutions both within and outside the region. A subregional network among the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN-POPIN) has already been organized, and there is potential for a second subregional network (POPIN) to be organized in South Asia within the framework of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC-POPIN).

34. Inputs from LAPTAP/ILO are still needed to improve both the coverage and quality of labour and family welfare programmes in the countries of the region. Therefore, continued UNFPA support is proposed for this team which is composed of five regional advisers - three in Bangkok, Thailand; one in New Delhi, India; and one in Suva, Fiji. The team will pay particular attention to extending programme activities to cover the informal labour sector in rural and urban areas, in mines and in large public enterprises. The informal sector presents a special challenge because of the difficulty in locating viable institutions with which LAPTAP/ILO can collaborate effectively. In the next four years, LAPTAP/ILO will also seek to reorient the focus of its population education/family welfare programme away from men and towards women. Thus, the team will place more emphasis on women workers, for example, in promotion of special welfare services and facilities for the female labour force.
35. It is recommended that the UNESCO regional advisory team on population education receive continued support in its work to integrate population education into programmes in school as well as in out-of-school settings. This team includes one regional adviser, two programme specialists and one documentation specialist based in Bangkok, Thailand, and one regional adviser based in Suva, Fiji. The need for technical assistance to strengthen skills in the technique of developing audio-visual aids remains strong. There is a continued need for development of materials for integrating population education into literacy and continuing education programmes, with the production of materials specially designed for illiterates being a high priority. The team will also pay attention to the further development of core messages to address emerging population problems related to adolescent fertility, urbanization, the aging and other population-related issues.

36. The major portion (approximately 70 per cent) of the population of the region resides in rural areas where access to services, information, and education and employment opportunities are often limited. In this regard, the integration of population and family life education into rural development programmes and agricultural extension programmes in countries will continue to require UNFPA support. Technical backstopping of such efforts from the FAO regional team will assist in incorporating population components in adult education and other non-formal education activities in rural areas. With respect to more formal settings, the FAO team will promote the integration of population components into the curricula of agricultural colleges and universities, particularly through the Asian Association of Agriculture Colleges and Universities and other regional or subregional bodies.

Basic data collection

37. A majority of countries in the Asia and the Pacific region are planning to conduct their next censuses between 1989 and 1991, and most of these will require technical assistance to carry out activities related to the preparation of censuses – cartographic work, census planning, questionnaire design, pilot censuses, pre-testing, and staff training. These countries will also need assistance in the processing of data, ranging from advice on equipment purchase and installation of software packages for census processing and analysis to design of processing programmes and staff training. Unlike previous census rounds, most countries have acquired some capability of processing their census data. However, post-census assistance is still required for evaluation of data, analysis and interpretation of census information and the writing of census reports in a form usable by administrators and policy makers.

38. To respond to these needs, it is proposed that UNFPA continue its support for the ESCAP-based regional adviser on population censuses and surveys, the regional adviser on data preparation and processing, as well as the regional adviser on data processing based in the South Pacific subregion. The Fund further recommends the addition of a regional adviser on population statistics at ESCAP to assist countries in the generation of special tabulations on specific population groups such as women, youth, the aging, and migrants, among others. This regional adviser will also study and report on trends in internal as well as international migration and assist countries in developing social statistics and indicators, using census
data. Strengthening the Fund's intercountry resource base for technical assistance should obviate the need for long-term resident advisers while still meeting country needs.

39. Four regional technical meetings relating to censuses and population data are proposed for the 1988-1991 period. These are: (a) a working group on software packages for processing census and survey data; (b) a workshop on computer-assisted coding; (c) a workshop on improving economic classifications in censuses and surveys; and (d) a seminar on multiround surveys for estimating vital statistics.

Population research and policy development

40. Human and institutional development with a view to fostering self-reliance in the area of demography will continue to require UNFPA support. Continued support is recommended for the fellowship programme at IIPS, Bombay, India. A recent evaluation conducted by ESCAP of past graduates found that with few exceptions the training at IIPS had contributed significantly to improving job performance. Moreover, the demand for these fellowships from countries of the region continues to be high. Apart from support for fellowships, it is recommended that the Fund explore, in collaboration with ESCAP, the feasibility of establishing a short-term training programme in demography at IIPS. The groundwork for establishing a population studies programme at the University of South Pacific to provide a subregional centre for such studies has been laid and will require continued UNFPA support over the four years. The importance of having a programme that is sensitive to the needs and circumstances of the subregion cannot be over-emphasized.

41. The need for technical assistance in the area of demographic analysis remains acute, particularly in the South Pacific area. The special circumstances of island countries and territories with mobile populations present unusual challenges to efforts at policy formulation and evaluation. It is, therefore, recommended that the regional population adviser post, based in the South Pacific with UNFPA support, be oriented particularly towards demographic and population data analysis in order to foster better understanding of the consequences of population trends for policy formulation and evaluation and to develop national capabilities in this regard.

42. Increasing urbanization is a discernible trend in many countries in the region. To understand better its impact on the welfare and behaviour of population groups, it is proposed that a study be conducted by ESCAP on the interrelationships between urban population growth and economic structures. In this connection, the demographic aspects of urbanization, particularly as they impact upon the role and status of women, should also be examined. The output of these studies are intended to provide guidance to policy makers and planners in all countries of the region.

43. In view of the fact that many countries in the region have adopted population policies and have acquired experience in implementing them, there is an increasing need to assist these countries in assessing the relevance and effectiveness of their efforts. To this end, it is proposed that the currently vacant post of regional adviser on population policies at ESCAP be filled to provide technical assistance to countries in (a) reviewing existing population policies and
programmes and their demographic impact vis-à-vis other socio-economic changes; (b) formulating new policy directions and programme strategies; and (c) developing methodologies for evaluating population policies and programmes.

44. The adoption and implementation of population policies in the region, which to date show a strong bias towards interventions in fertility behaviour, have not been matched with equal progress in the integration of population factors into development plans and programmes. For this reason, a concerted effort needs to be made at the intercountry level to sensitize policy makers and planners and to assist them in taking action in this regard. Therefore it is proposed that the second vacant regional adviser post at ESCAP be redesignated as regional adviser on population and development and filled as soon as possible. Similarly, the post of population specialist based in the South Pacific should also be redesignated as population and development adviser and its functions amended accordingly.

45. The facilities at the Centre for Development Studies at Trivandrum, India, should serve as a resource for regional research and training in population and development. It is proposed that ESCAP take the initiative in forging links with the Centre and conducting collaborative research and training activities to promote the transfer and adaptation of skills and experiences in population and development.

46. With respect to macro-level planning, the integration of population considerations into national agricultural and rural development plans can serve as an entry point to reach the grass-roots level, in particular groups that are dispersed and hard to reach. To this end, greater effort is needed in the development of appropriate methodology. The Fund, therefore, recommends continuing its support for the two FAO regional advisers to develop a sound conceptual framework and assist countries in its application. Moreover, the team should be encouraged to collaborate with regional and subregional bodies such as the Regional Commission on Food and Agriculture and the Regional Forestry Advisory Committee to ensure that population is given due attention in their work. Emphasis should be placed on promoting awareness of the impact of population dynamics on resources and on the well-being of people, including the interrelationship between poverty and fertility. Programme development efforts should focus on addressing the basic needs of deprived communities and population groups, particularly rural women, through integrated approaches encompassing functional literacy, income generation and FP/MCH education and services.

47. The population, human resources and development planning activities of the LAPTAP/IL0 team have built upon ILO's traditional concerns, while at the same time broadening the scope of the activities to cover such issues as the socio-economic implications of high population growth; migration and population distribution; health; nutrition education; and the status of women. Continued support of this effort is recommended particularly in the areas of training, development and application of methodologies for planning, creation of institutional bases and formulation of policies. The team will also oversee some action-oriented research that will have multi-country implications, such as studies on documenting the experiences of countries in population and development planning; child labour and its links to family life and fertility; the functioning of the family as a socio-economic unit; problems of urban growth; and the integration of women into development with special reference to human resource development.
48. Efforts to develop and refine methodologies as well as to clarify critical issues can only be translated into action through adequate political commitment. To this end, organizations which have direct access to policy makers and parliamentarians, such as the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development and the Asian Population and Development Association, should continue to receive UNFPA support for their efforts to promote and sustain political interest in population issues.

Multisector and special programmes

49. As population growth slows or stabilizes, a population's age composition changes. With the drop in mortality rates and increase in life expectancy, aging of population ensues. This demographic phenomenon is becoming an important factor in changing population structures in the region, particularly in East and South-East Asia. It is, therefore, proposed that some effort be made at the regional or subregional level to alert Governments of concerned countries to the long-range impact of slowing growth on population structure. In this regard, support is recommended for intercountry consultations and the preparation as well as dissemination of educational materials.

50. Since 1982, UNFPA has supported the Asia and Pacific Programme for Development Training and Communication Planning (DTCP), which provides communications support to UNFPA-funded country programmes and projects. As a result of its general backstopping and technical advisory services, DTCP has been effective in assisting Governments, inter alia, in the development of strategy, training of staff and development of appropriate materials. Continued UNFPA support for such services is recommended for the 1988-1991 programme period. The focus of DTCP activities has been and will be on rural programmes. DTCP works very closely with the FAO team, and collaborative efforts between the two will continue to be explored.

Evaluation

51. Consonant with the intention to promote collaboration among the various executing agencies and to ensure co-ordination of inputs, it is recommended that provision be made for programme monitoring and development. In particular, an evaluation of the population programme of ESCAP is scheduled to take place in the spring of 1989 in an effort to define better its role as a regional focal point.

Financial summary

52. As indicated above, the proposed UNFPA-supported regional programme for Asia and the Pacific for the period 1988-1991 is estimated at $27.6 million. See tables 4 and 5 for a breakdown by functional category and work-plan category, respectively.