

Department of Economic and Social Development

# Child Mortality since the 1960s

A Database for Developing Countries



United Nations

New York, 1992

## NOTE

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in the present publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The term "country" as used in the text and tables also refers, as appropriate, to territories or areas.

In some tables, the designations "developed" and "developing" economies are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

The report has been edited and consolidated in accordance with United Nations practice and requirements.

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ST/ESA/SER.A/128

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United Nations publication

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Sales No. E.92.XIII.10

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ISBN 92-1-151247-6

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## PREFACE

Child survival programmes have been given considerable attention during the past decade. Governments and international organizations have intensified their efforts to improve child health and survival in developing countries. Specific goals for children and their welfare have been formulated at international forums. One of the major goals incorporated into the Plan of Action adopted at the World Summit for Children, held at the United Nations in New York in September 1990, concerns the reduction of the mortality of infants and children under five years of age. The Plan of Action also stresses the need to monitor progress towards these goals during the 1990s.

This publication brings together the available data on child mortality in developing countries, covering a period from around 1960 to the present. The purpose is to inform policy makers, programme planners and researchers of the availability of data and to demonstrate their range of variation, in order to provide a basis for assessing levels and trends and for monitoring progress towards mortality reduction.

The data assembled here are major resources for the demographic research undertaken by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat—in studies of child mortality, in monitoring mortality trends and in preparing demographic estimates and projections. Outside requests during the past few years for this type of database indicate its potential value to researchers and policy makers.

The Population Division recently prepared a manual entitled *Step-by-Step Guide to the Estimation of Child Mortality* (United Nations, 1990), which is

accompanied by a microcomputer program, QFIVE. The *Guide* was prepared at the request of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as part of its effort to improve the capability of its field officers to monitor progress in reducing infant and child mortality. It is being widely used by demographers in research and training. The present database is expected to become a valuable companion volume to the *Guide*.

The databases for 20 Latin American countries were prepared in collaboration with the Centro Latinoamericano de Demografía (CELADE).

Grateful acknowledgement is due to John Blacker, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and to Kenneth Hill, The Johns Hopkins University, who served as consultants for this project. Mr. Hill wrote chapter I, on scope and methodology, and chapter II, on main findings; he also served as scientific editor of the publication. Acknowledgement is also due to the United Nations Children's Fund for providing part of the financial support that made this publication possible.

The data are presented without adjustments or smoothing. Evaluation of the data for individual countries is not provided although guidelines on how such evaluation can be carried out are presented. The estimates given in the tables and graphs should therefore be interpreted with caution.

As part of its monitoring activities, the Population Division will continue to update the database. Comments and suggestions concerning the database are welcome. They should be addressed to the Director, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Development, United Nations, New York, New York 10017.



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## Explanatory notes

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.

The term "billion" signifies a thousand million.

A point (.) is used to indicate decimals.

The following symbols have been used in the tables:

Two dots (..) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

An em dash (—) indicates that the amount is nil or negligible.

A hyphen (-) indicates that the item is not applicable.

A minus sign (-) before a number indicates a deficit or decrease, except as indicated.

Use of a hyphen (-) between dates representing years (e.g., 1984-1985), signifies the full period involved, including the beginning and end years. A slash (e.g., 1984/85) indicates a financial year, school year or crop year.

Details and percentages in tables do not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

The following abbreviations have been used in this volume:

CPS	Contraceptive Prevalence Survey
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
NDS	National Demographic Survey
PES	Post-enumeration Survey
WFS	World Fertility Survey