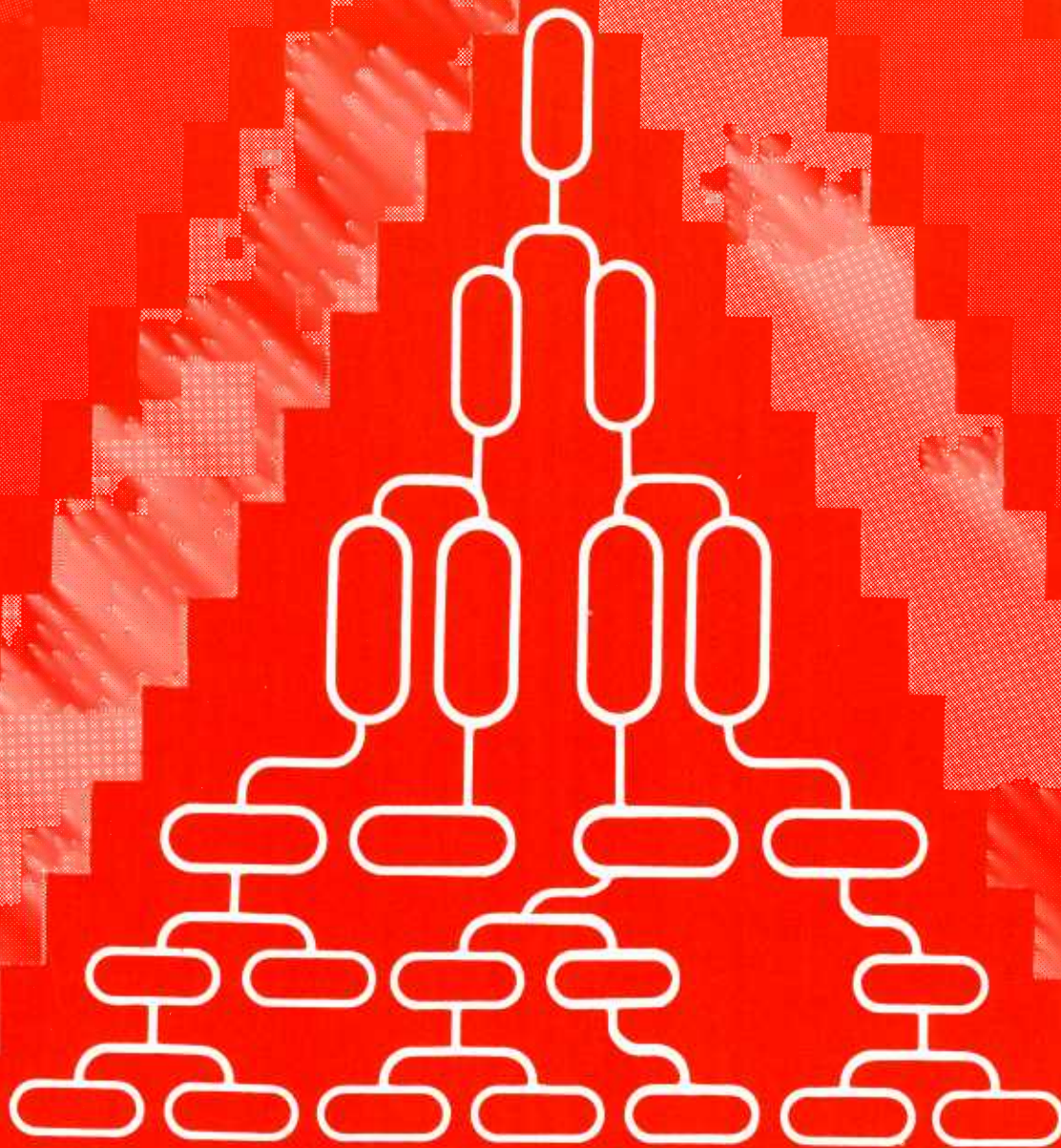


CASE STUDIES IN POPULATION POLICY:

# Mexico



UNITED  NATIONS

Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

Population Policy Paper No. 21

C A S E S T U D I E S I N P O P U L A T I O N P O L I C Y :

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# Mexico



U N I T E D N A T I O N S

New York, 1989

NOTE

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ST/ESA/SER.R/89

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## PREFACE

This publication is one in a series of country case studies being prepared by the Population Division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat that focus on selected issues in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies in various developing and developed countries.

The objective of the series is to present broadly comparative, issue-oriented case studies that illustrate the myriad approaches countries have pursued in implementing, formulating and evaluating their population policies. The specific issues addressed include the manner by which policies, programmes and targets aim to influence demographic variables directly or indirectly, how they have been formulated, and the extent to which they have been implemented in relation to one another and to other social, economic and political goals. Emphasis is placed on the problems encountered and the strategies undertaken to resolve the problems. It is hoped that this series will be useful to persons responsible for population programmes and policies and, in general, for the sharing of experiences among countries in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies.

The population policy overview for Mexico presented on pages 1-6 of this publication is taken from World Population Policies, volume II, Gabon to Norway (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.XIII.3). The main body of the report was drafted by Francisco Alba of the Colegio de México, A.C., Mexico, as a consultant to the United Nations. The views and opinions expressed are those of the consultant and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations. The estimates and projections presented in the population policy overview may differ from those presented in the main body of the publication, owing to demographic assessments, subsequent adjustments and differences of time reference. Special acknowledgement is due to the United Nations Population Fund for its support of project INT/84/PO8, which made possible the preparation of this publication.

To date, reports issued in the Case Studies in Population Policy series are:

MALAYSIA	(ST/ESA/SER.R/80)
KUWAIT	(ST/ESA/SER.R/82)
NIGERIA	(ST/ESA/SER.R/83)
BRAZIL	(ST/ESA/SER.R/84)

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preface .....	iii
Explanatory notes .....	vii
POPULATION POLICY OVERVIEW .....	1
INTRODUCTION	
A. Historical background .....	7
B. Population problems and their relevance to socio-economic development .....	8
C. Philosophy towards social and economic intervention .....	12
I. THE DEMOGRAPHIC SETTING	
A. Historical demographic trends .....	15
B. Current demographic trends .....	20
II. POPULATION POLICY SITUATION	
A. Formulation .....	26
B. Implementation .....	29
C. Evaluation .....	33
III. ASSESSMENT OF EFFORTS TO CONTROL POPULATION GROWTH .....	35
IV. INTERNATIONAL COMPONENT .....	40
V. CONCLUSIONS .....	42
REFERENCES .....	48
<u>Annex</u>	
GLOSSARY .....	51

List of tables

	<u>Page</u>
1. Indicators of social and economic development, 1940-1980 ....	9
2. Census enumerations and corrected populations, 1895-1980 ....	16
3. Distribution of population by regions, 1940-1980 .....	18
4. Fertility estimates, 1970-1981 .....	21
5. Age-specific fertility rates, 1970-1981 .....	21
6. Women in conjugal unions practicing contraception; distribution of practice by method, 1976-1982 .....	24

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Reference to "dollars" (\$) indicates United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.

The term "billion" signifies a thousand million.

Annual rates of growth or change refer to annual compound rates, unless otherwise stated.

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

A point (.) is used to indicate decimals.

The following symbols have been used in the tables:

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

A 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.

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

371.7 Mexican pesos = \$U.S. 1 as of 1985.



POPULATION POLICY OVERVIEW

DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS	CURRENT PERCEPTION																					
<p><b>SIZE/AGE STRUCTURE/GROWTH</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Population:</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>1985</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>2025</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(thousands)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">78 996</td> <td style="text-align: center;">154 085</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-14 years (%)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">42.2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">24.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60+ years (%)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5.4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11.6</td> </tr> </table> <table> <tr> <td>Rate of:</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>1980-85</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>2020-25</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>growth</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>natural increase</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26.8</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11.3</td> </tr> </table>	Population:	<u>1985</u>	<u>2025</u>	(thousands)	78 996	154 085	0-14 years (%)	42.2	24.8	60+ years (%)	5.4	11.6	Rate of:	<u>1980-85</u>	<u>2020-25</u>	growth	2.6	1.1	natural increase	26.8	11.3	<p>The Government perceives the growth rate as <u>unsatisfactory</u> and <u>too high</u>, despite achievements in controlling growth.</p>
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## GENERAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Overall approach to population problems: The Government wishes to reduce substantially demographic growth, chiefly by modifying fertility. It combines direct intervention to modify demographic variables with economic and social restructuring. In addition, increasing importance has been assigned to adjusting patterns of spatial distribution, improving the status of women, the quality of life and social equity. The 1973 General Population Law promotes equilibrium between birth rates, population distribution and the distribution of socio-economic activity. In 1978, the Government formulated a regional demographic policy to adjust spatial distribution.

Importance of population policy in achieving development objectives: Population policy has been incorporated into development plans. The Population Policy of 1974 was established to regulate phenomenon that affect population structure, volume, dynamics and distribution. The Government has emphasized that regulating demographic variables is indispensable for accelerating economic and social development. Population policy serves to co-ordinate programmes in education, public health, investment, agrarian reform, rural development, employment etc. A National Population Programme, 1984-1988, has been formulated.

## INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Population data systems and development planning: Mexico has a long history of census-taking, with the 1980 census being the tenth conducted since 1895. A national demographic survey was conducted in 1982. In 1980, the Federal Statistics Law assigned responsibility to the National Population Council for co-ordinating statistics on demographic planning and development. Since 1976 the Ministry of Programming and Budget has been responsible for formulating, implementing and evaluating development plans. The national development plan for the period 1983-1988 is currently in effect.

Integration of population within development planning: The National Population Council (CONAPO), established under the 1974 Population Law, is an interministerial body headed by the Minister of the Interior. It is responsible for incorporating demographic variables into overall development plans. CONAPO integrates population policy into the socio-economic development plans of states and sectors and in 1985 issued the National Population Programme, 1984-1988.

## POLICIES AND MEASURES

Changes in population size and age structure: In 1973 the Government made a dramatic turnaround in its population policy and stated that it sought to reduce population growth. Policies have included direct intervention such as family planning, sex education, and communication and information programmes. Indirect measures have included raising educational levels and creating additional employment. The 1978 Regional Demographic Policy divided states into four regions based on fertility levels and population growth, and assigned targets and specific programmes to each to narrow regional differences. The National Population Council set a target of 1.8 per cent growth by 1988, and of 1.0 per cent by the year 2000. While social security coverage is currently available only to employees and members of certain co-operatives, coverage is gradually being extended to rural areas and to workers not yet covered.

Mortality and morbidity: The major objective is to create a single national health care system capable of meeting current and future needs. The right to health protection is guaranteed by the Constitution. The 1984 General Health Law stipulated the inclusion of the right to health in development plans. The Government has aimed at providing health services to all, particularly in the rural and urban fringes. The Ministry of Health has formulated strategies of decentralization - for example, giving states administrative responsibilities, modernizing information and evaluation systems. Goals include complete vaccination for those age six years and under; screening services; early detection for high-risk pregnancies; prenatal care; supplementary food during pregnancy and lactation; extension of basic services to marginal zones; lowering the incidence of malnutrition; and protecting the elderly and infants in rural and marginal zones. The target is to decrease the crude death rate from 8 per thousand in 1982 to 7 per thousand in 1988.

Fertility and the family: The official policy is to lower fertility. The National Family Planning Programme of 1985-1988 employs a three-pronged approach based on provision and improvement of maternal and child health and family well-being. Direct measures include family planning, sex education, and communication and information programmes. The Government emphasizes the interdependence of such measures with indirect action, such as raising educational levels, increasing employment and improving women's status. Abortion is illegal except to save the woman's life or in cases of rape or incest. Sterilization is legal.

International migration: The policy is to maintain current low immigration levels. In response to the large influx of political refugees from neighbouring countries seeking asylum in Mexico, the Government created the Mexican Commission for Assistance to Refugees (COMAR). It is estimated that as of January 1987 there were 175,000 refugees in Mexico. The goals of the Commission include studying refugee needs and working with international organizations to formulate projects and seek permanent solutions to the refugee problem. Mexico has maintained that top priority be given to guarding the rights and integrity of refugees, and respecting the principle of non-intervention in other countries' internal matters. While the Government

has no emigration policy, it acknowledges that the large flow of undocumented Mexicans to the United States requires negotiation between the two countries, and that the migrants be accorded appropriate human rights. There is also growing concern over the influx of returning undocumented Mexican immigrants from the United States as a consequence of the United States Immigration Reform and Control Act, which went into effect in May 1987. It is feared that the return movement will have significant repercussions for Mexico in terms of reduced remittances and higher unemployment.

Spatial distribution: The policy is to reduce migration to major metropolitan regions and other urban centres, and to decrease rural out-migration. Strategies include slowing metropolitan growth and promoting small and intermediate towns and rural development. In 1978, a regional demographic plan was adopted. It aims to adjust spatial distribution by retaining population in certain areas and channeling migration to new receiving areas, ensuring that no state grew by more than 4.5 per cent annually. One objective was to decrease the growth of the Federal District (by relocating public employees), Monterrey and the border cities in the region of Baja, California Norte. The National Urban and Housing Development Programme, 1984-1988, has as its objective the decentralization of functions, and territorial deconcentration by controlling the growth of large cities and developing medium-sized cities. The goal is to resettle 4 million people in 59 medium-sized cities by the year 2000.

Status of women and population: The Programme for Integrating Women in Development, one of seven programmes of the National Population Programme, 1984-1988, has several objectives, including enhancing the position of women in the family and in the labour market and encouraging women's participation in rural development. A National Commission for Women and Women's Commissions in federal and state agencies have been created to promote women's participation in development. Information on the minimum legal age at marriage for women varies: both 14 years and 18 years have been reported.



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#### SELECTED SOURCES

The information contained in the overview is based on the continuous monitoring of population policies undertaken by the Population Division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, as part of its work programme.

The Government of Mexico's response to a United Nations questionnaire entitled "Fifth Population Inquiry Among Governments: monitoring of Government perceptions and policies on demographic trends and levels in relation to development as of 1982" constitutes an important source for the overview.

Except where otherwise noted, the demographic estimates and projections are based on the tenth round of global demographic assessments undertaken by the Population Division. The various demographic indicators are derived from data that were available to the United Nations generally by the end of 1985; therefore, the figures supersede those that were previously published by the United Nations.

Pan American Health Organization (1986). Health Conditions in the Americas, 1981-1984, vol. II. Scientific publication No. 500. Washington, D.C.

United Nations. World Population Prospects: Estimates and Projections as Assessed in 1984 (Sales No. E.86.XIII.3).

\_\_\_\_\_. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (1987). Case Studies in Population Policy: Mexico. (ST/ESA/SER.R/89).

\_\_\_\_\_. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, and United Nations Population Fund (1979). Population Policy Compendium: Mexico.

\_\_\_\_\_. (1985). The Mexico City Conference: The Debate on the Review and Appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1986). Refugees (October), pp. 2-22.

#### Contraceptive prevalence rate

United Nations. Recent Levels and Trends of Contraceptive Use as Assessed in 1987 (Sales No. E.89.XIII.4).

#### Female mean age at first marriage

United Nations. World Population Trends and Policies: 1987 Monitoring Report (Sales No. E.88.XIII.3).

## INTRODUCTION

The present document discusses development policy in Mexico and examines its formulation, style of implementation and general frame of evaluation. It will show that there has been considerable continuity in Mexico's basic population policy since 1973, although in the course of implementing that policy a great deal of organizational development has taken place which was intended to secure co-ordination in a rapidly expanding programme of activities. Population policy in Mexico will be seen to reflect a broad consensus shared by successive administrations.

### A. Historical background

Located in the southern part of the North American continent, Mexico is bordered by the United States to the north, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea to the east, Guatemala and Belize to the south-east and the Pacific Ocean to the south and west. Mexico has a land area of about 2 million square kilometres (772,200 square miles), which places it as the world's thirteenth largest country. Within the American continent it is the fourth largest country.

The emergence of the Mexican nation was marked by a series of ruptures in historical continuity. The first great rupture occurred with the conquest and colonization of the territory by the Spanish. The sixteenth century was a period of precipitous decline of the native population; the several millions of indigenous inhabitants in the territory at the beginning of the century (estimates go up to 25 million) were reduced to scarcely 1 million by the end of the century. In the colonial period from the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth century, a diverse people was consolidated in a new social order that was as much racial as cultural.

Mexico gained political independence from Spain in 1821. By the late nineteenth century, modernization of the economy had begun and proceeded at an accelerated pace. New links were created with the industrialized world and a new place secured within the international community. Throughout the nineteenth century, the major concerns of Mexican politicians regarding population were that the country needed more people for its defence, for occupation of the vast and empty (northern) territories and for exploration of the abundant resources commonly believed to exist within its borders. The secession of Texas (1836) and a few years later the loss of much of Mexico's northern territories (1848) had a great impact on Mexican social and political life and on Mexico's national perspective.

This process of early economic and social modernization was violently interrupted by the revolution of 1910. The revolution was followed by a period of reform and the creation of new political institutions, which extended into the 1930s and 1940s. Subsequently, the country entered a long period of economic and social development that furthered the country's industrialization and modernization through a policy of import substitution. The economic growth beginning in the early 1940s was sustained up to the early 1980s. The gross domestic product (GDP) doubled in almost every decade, and conditions favoured the formation of capital and the rapid advancement of modern sectors of the economy. The highest growth rates, close to 8 per cent per year, were attained in the manufacturing sector.

In spite of the economic and social difficulties of the 1980s, the general stability of Mexican society and its institutions have been maintained. A strong State has served to consolidate national attitudes, and Mexico today has a mixed economy combining dynamic governmental and private sectors. Mexico is no longer a predominantly rural and agrarian country, although rural characteristics persist. Despite a continued growth of the rural population in absolute terms, from 17.7 million in 1940 to 23.5 million in 1980, only a third of the total population in 1980 is considered rural. <sup>1/</sup> By 1980 agriculture accounted for less than 10 per cent of the GDP but employed a quarter of the labour force. A view of recent social and economic trends is provided in table 1, which indicates substantial progress in income, literacy and access to amenities such as piped water and sewerage. Mexico is ranked among the new industrializing countries and is considered in World Bank development reports as one of the upper middle-income economies.

#### B. Population problems and their relevance to socio-economic development

The economic difficulties recurrent in Mexico since 1982 have intensified some of the country's major population-related problems, including lack of adequate employment opportunities, excessive urban and demographic concentration, inequality of access to basic social services, and continuing transborder migration. At the same time the stagnant economic situation is raising many new questions concerning population trends and socio-economic development. Population policy was predicated on the assumption that improvements on the demographic front would go together with improvements in socio-economic conditions. However, concerns regarding future developments arise when socio-economic conditions appear to be deteriorating precisely at a time when major successes on the demographic front have been achieved.



Table 1. Indicators of social and economic development, 1940-1980  
(Percentages)

Indicators	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
Labour force in agriculture	65.4	50.2	49.4 <sup>a/</sup>	39.2	25.8
Literate population <sup>b/</sup>	43.2	55.9	65.5	74.1	82.7
Urban population <sup>c/</sup>	20.0	28.0	36.5	44.9	51.8
Rural population <sup>d/</sup>	70.0	56.7	48.3	40.4	33.7
Houses with running water	-	17.0	23.4	61.4	70.2
Houses with sewer	-	-	29.7	41.0	51.2
One-room houses	-	60.4	57.8	39.8	29.8
Occupants per house (Number)	-	4.9	5.5	5.8	5.5
Population under 15 years <sup>e/</sup>	41.2	43.1	45.6	46.7	44.7
GDP per capita (in 1970 pesos) <sup>f/</sup>	-	5 500	6 100	8 700	12 100

Source: National census, various years.

a/ Estimated. Oscar Altimir, "La medición de la población económicamente activa de México, 1950-1970", Demografía y Economía, vol. 8, No. 1 (1974), pp. 50-83.

b/ Among population aged 15 and over.

c/ Localities with more than 15,000 inhabitants.

d/ Localities with less than 2,500 inhabitants.

e/ For 1940, census figures; for 1950-1980, corrected figures. Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto, Consejo Nacional de Población and Centro Latinoamericano de Demografía, México: estimaciones y proyecciones de población (1983).

f/ Pedro Aspe and José Gómez de León, "El crecimiento de la población de México". (Mimeo., May 1985).

In the environment of a sluggish economy, informal labour force activities have multiplied, while wage levels have deteriorated. There is no doubt that it will be extremely difficult to provide productive employment for the large birth cohorts of the 1960s and 1970s, which will provide nearly 1 million new entrants into the labour force every year from now until the year 2000. The provision of urban services will be tremendously strained by having to respond to growing population-related demands in an environment of meager finances and growing restraints on public expenditure. In this context a vicious circle has developed. In spending money to prevent deterioration of urban services and infrastructure (a very unwelcome development given the urban bias of the whole economic and social system) little is left to counter the regional and rural-urban imbalances that gave rise in the first place to heavy rural-urban migration and concentration of population. Thus, the growth of the three major urban areas of the country, including the ecologically strained metropolitan area of Mexico City in the crowded valley of Mexico, continues unabated. The social consequences of the "economic crisis" are beginning to be studied and documented. <sup>2/</sup> Information is still fragmentary but the most reasonable interpretations point to disturbing trends in income distribution and poverty. Shrinking wages and a fall in demand for labour are indicated by a sharp decline in wage earnings as a share of the GDP from 36 per cent in 1982 to 28 per cent in 1984 (United Nations, 1985). Poverty, which in the past was particularly concentrated in rural areas (Van Ginneken, 1980), has probably increased in urban areas. A disturbing question being raised is whether the transition towards lower fertility might provoke greater disparities within the society. Turmoil in Central America, economic retrenchment in Mexico and attempts by the United States to stem the numbers of those crossing its border have increased the number of refugees and other displaced persons in Mexico, and of Mexican transborder migrants. If the accommodating balance in international migration is broken, extra pressure could be added to a Mexican society that is already experiencing substantial socio-economic strain.

These recent problems are added to the underlying long-term perspective that dominates population policy as it addresses the issue of harmonizing population trends with socio-economic development. Indeed, population policy formulation in Mexico started from the consideration of very long term trends of population as they might impinge upon the country's national security concerns and development perspectives.

Early in the 1970s, Mexican policy makers realized that the country was facing a very new and different situation. Compared to 1940, when there were 20 million inhabitants, Mexico had a population of 51 million in 1970. Parts of the economy had reached an advanced stage of

modernization and industrialization, but the needs and aspirations of the Mexican population were growing and becoming more difficult to satisfy. Mexico was widely perceived up to the late 1960s as a country where high rates of population growth did not seem to constitute an impediment to development. <sup>3/</sup> Since then, these perceptions have altered dramatically, precipitating new policies and new strategies.

In the past, population growth and the accompanying phenomenon of rural-urban migration were taken largely for granted and not subject to intervention. Instead, they were justified on the assumption that they accelerated the development process. The simple consideration that GDP was growing faster than population somehow postponed the issue of the economic and social implications of rapid population growth. With an annual increase in GDP per capita around 3 per cent since the 1930s - even with population rising over 3.0 per cent annually since the 1950s - this attitude was well entrenched. As the 1960s wore on, however, a different view of population trends and issues began to emerge, prompted by a growing body of research suggesting that the country would soon encounter substantial difficulties in finding accommodation for its population if demographic trends persisted into the future. <sup>4/</sup> In discussing the country's economic development prospects, the idea that rapid population growth was dissipating the gains from development efforts was becoming widely accepted. It was in this set of circumstances that government officials began to advocate adoption of a population policy, in order to protect economic and social advances. <sup>5/</sup>

Late in the 1960s there were growing indications that the results of the long period of sustained economic growth fell short of what had been expected. More recently, it has been argued that the absorption mechanisms which Mexico had relied on to accommodate its rapidly growing population growth were exhausted around 1970; the availability of land for new settlement had greatly decreased and the financial burden of supplying the growing urban population with essential services and subsidized staple goods was contributing to great budgetary difficulties (Alba and Potter, 1986).

Confronted with an economic and social system showing signs of stress, and a projected population of between 123 and 147 million by the end of the century, Mexico's policy makers concluded that it was important to try to bring the country's economic and demographic trends into balance. In consequence, the development strategy of the 1970s called for more expansive fiscal and monetary policies, faster economic growth, and intervention to curb rapid population growth.

In 1973 Mexico officially redefined its population policy. The principal objective of the new policy was to harmonize demographic dynamism with economic and social development in order to raise the

standard of living of the population. Before 1973, demographic policy had emphasized mortality reduction, maintenance of high fertility, and inducing Mexicans abroad to return home, with the intention of promoting population growth and integrating the country economically and socially.

This policy was dominant for roughly 40 years, a period during which the entire Mexican institutional framework favoured and supported population growth. The Government, the church, the school system and other institutions supported, directly or indirectly, large families and population growth, while ignoring or discouraging contraception. Until the 1960s, elite groups seemed consciously or passively to accept unrestricted population growth. Yet because the increase in population continued unabated and because multiple and persistent problems faced the country, the Government reversed its official position in 1973. Subsequently, most sectors of public opinion and interest groups followed the Government's lead.

The changes that followed the implementation of the new population policy have been felt throughout Mexican society and the rate of population has declined rapidly. This declining trend in population growth has significantly altered the demographic projections for Mexico. The population of Mexico, nearly 80 million in 1985, is projected to reach between 100 and 109 million by the turn of the century.

The 1970s and early 1980s have been marked by many advances, but also by interruptions and setbacks. Nevertheless, the country's population dynamism is still a key element in its development prospects. The deteriorating economic situation is affecting Mexico's ability to absorb its population and to complete its demographic transition. If this transition stalls, the national prospects will certainly be affected. It is clear, then, that sustained economic growth and social development is required to ensure a continuing capacity for absorbing a large and still rapidly growing population.

#### C. Philosophy towards social and economic intervention

The Constitution of Mexico, adopted in 1917, makes Government responsible for regulating the use of natural resources for the social benefit and for betterment of the living standards of the population, and contains an explicit mandate for the State to take a leading role in economic and social affairs. Active State participation and intervention in the economy is further supported by constitutional provisions which make the State responsible for providing certain services and for the exploitation of strategic resources.

The Constitution embraced as a fundamental principle the responsibility of the State for transforming the society, and emphasized rectoría (leadership) of the Government in economic life, along with responsibility for promoting social equality. The programming and planning of policies and actions on regulation, control and promotion of economic and social developments are thus considered and accepted as central functions of the Government.

Beginning with the Lopez Portillo administration (1976-1982), the Ministry of Programming and Budget (SPP) has been responsible for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of a National Development Plan. The Global Development Plan that covered the 1980-1982 period was geared to take advantage of the high oil prices of the 1970s by rapidly exploiting and marketing the abundant oil reserves of the country. The current national development plan (1983-1988) is focused on long-term structural adjustment and immediate reordering of the economy owing to the dramatically changed international context and the domestic milieu of the country.

The leadership of the Government in economic and social affairs has been a basic factor in the history of Mexico since the current political system was formed after the 1910 revolution. Recently this leadership was further institutionalized through the Planning Law of 1983.

The planning system in the federal public sector is based on presidential decrees, making it incumbent on all ministries, departments of State, centralized agencies and semi-public enterprises to present, within a given time, both their investment programmes and their programmes of activities for the next six-year period. Mexico's federal organization provides economic planning only at the national level. The development plans prepared by the Federal Government are not mandatory for the federal states or municipalities and are merely indicative for the private sector.

National development planning in Mexico dates back to the General Planning Law of the Republic (Ley sobre Planificación General de la República), which was enacted in 1930. In 1933 the National Revolutionary Party (PNR) adopted the "Sexennial Plan of the PNR" to guide government actions between 1933 and 1940. This was followed by a second six-year plan which formed the party platform in 1939. Between 1945 and 1962, development planning declined in importance. Several national co-ordinating or planning bodies had been established during the Second World War, but these were largely consultative organs. Interest in comprehensive formal planning revived in 1959 with the creation of the Secretariat of the Presidency, charged with introducing order in government expenditure and public investment. A further step in the direction of re-establishing central planning occurred in 1962

with the creation of the Interministerial Planning Commission, which drafted the Plan of Immediate Action, 1962-1964, and formulated guidelines for the period 1966-1970.

Greater institutionalization of economic and social planning in Mexico was accomplished during the Lopez Portillo administration (1976-1982) with the establishment of the Ministry of Programming and Budget (SPP), which was given the task of formulating national development plans, of co-ordinating the programmes of federal ministries, and of co-ordinating federal programmes which were at the state and municipal levels. The financial aspects of the plans are co-ordinated by the Ministry of the Treasury and Public Credit (SHCP).

Given the changing fortunes of the country, the specific objectives and particular strategies of the successive administrations have changed significantly, although the general national objectives of the Government have remained basically the same, emphasizing social justice and national economic independence. Succeeding Mexican Governments have considered these to be essential obligations and the source of their legitimacy.

## I. THE DEMOGRAPHIC SETTING

### A. Historical demographic trends

The 1910 Revolution was followed by a period of political, social and economic reform. This was a time when old social patterns persisted while new paths of economic and social development were explored. In the 1930s, mortality levels began to decrease from a crude death rate in the low thirties before the Revolution to a rate in the middle twenties. This set the stage for an acceleration of the rate of population growth from the moderate and relatively stable level of between 1 and 1.5 per cent that had persisted since the latter part of the nineteenth century. The yearly rate of population growth was 1.7 per cent in the 1930-1940 period. In 1930, the country had 16.5 million inhabitants. In the 1930s, the Government's policy of introducing public health and sanitation measures were efforts to incorporate demographic considerations into economic and social development. Mexico sought to advance its national objectives through population growth, by encouraging fertility and lowering mortality.

Around 1940, Mexico entered a new stage of development. The economy, sustained by capital accumulation and abundant and cheap manpower, grew at an annual average of 6-7 per cent for three decades. During this period of sustained economic growth and political stability, Mexico substantially increased its population growth rate. The crude death rate dropped precipitously, from 23.3 deaths per thousand in the 1935-1939 period to 8.6 in 1970-1974. Life expectancy at birth increased by almost 20 years for men - from 40.4 years in 1940 to 60.1 in 1970 - and by more than 20 years for women - from 42.5 in 1950 to 64.0 in 1970 (Benitez and Cabrera, 1967; Cabrera and others, 1973). This decline was more pronounced between 1940 and 1960, and slowed down in the 1960s. Since in this long period there was no significant change in fertility, the total fertility rate remained in about 6.5 children per woman. <sup>6/</sup> Mexico's growth rate doubled from an average of 1.7 per cent in the 1930s to an average above 3 per cent per year in the 1960s and early 1970s. As a result, population grew from 20 million in 1940 to more than 51 million in 1970 (see table 2).

Acceleration of the population growth rate has had not only important consequences for population size, but also important implications for demographic structure. The age structure of the Mexican population, which was already young, became even younger. In 1970, 46.2 per cent of the total population was under 15 years of age.

An important set of demographic trends with far reaching economic and social implications were the changes affecting the territorial distribution of population. Through internal migration, population



Table 2. Census enumerations and corrected population, 1895-1980

Year	Population census a/	Annual average growth (percentage)	Population corrected (thousands)	Annual average growth (percentage)
1895	12 632 427	-		-
1900	13 607 259	1.50		-
1910	15 160 369	1.09		-
1921	14 334 780	-0.50		-
1930	16 552 722	1.72	17 063 b/	-
1940	19 653 552	1.73	20 244 b/	1.72
1950	25 791 017	2.73	27 376 c/	3.06
1960	34 923 129	3.07	37 073 c/	3.08
1970	48 225 238	3.41	51 176 c/	3.28
1980	66 846 833	3.26	69 393 c/	3.09

Sources:

a/ Dirección General de Estadística, Censos Generales de Población, various years.

b/ For population corrected 1930 and 1940, Centro de Estudios Económicos y Demográficos, Dinámica de la Población de México (El Colegio de México, 1970).

c/ Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, Consejo Nacional de Población y Centro Latinoamericano de Demografía, México. Estimaciones y proyecciones de población, 1950-2000 (México, D.F., 1983).

became increasingly concentrated in a few urban centres. Regional disparities in economic, social and political resources underlie this population movement and the persistent unevenness of the territorial distribution of the population, as seen in the high concentration coupled with great dispersion.

Regional imbalance in the spatial distribution of population is characterized by a process of concentration of population in the Valley of Mexico (Region VII) and a northward movement (Regions I and II), 7/ and are illustrated in table 3. Although the entire country has been involved in these processes, the central regions (IV, V and VI) have been the main suppliers of population. In 1940, the Valley of Mexico included 14.7 per cent of the population; by 1970 this region's population had reached 22.7 per cent. The northward movement has been just as steady, although more diffuse. In 1940, the north-north-east regions (I and II) included 17.4 per cent of the population, and by 1970 they embraced 19.2 per cent. The central regions (IV, V and VI) have been losing their share of the population from 39.8 per cent in 1940 to only 32.9 per cent in 1970. These tendencies followed a course that started back in the country's history, well documented since 1900, that accelerated after 1940. The south-south-west region (VIII) that had maintained its share of population between 1900 and 1940 became part of the disequilibrating process, so that by 1970 it had only 14.6 per cent of the total population compared with 17.8 per cent in 1940 (see table 3).

These regional population shifts have been accompanied by a growing concentration of population in urban centres. While the rural population (residents in localities with less than 2,500 inhabitants) increased from 13.7 to 19.4 million, urban population growth in localities with more than 15,000 inhabitants was about fourfold, from 4.9 to 21.6 million. In 1940-1970 urbanization accelerated to the extent that Mexico, which in 1940 had an urban population of only 20 per cent, had acquired by 1970 an urban population of 45 per cent. 8/ The non-urban population has risen disproportionately only in regions suited to produce commercial crops which benefited from a large-scale agricultural infrastructure. These are located in the north-east, the Gulf and the south-south-east regions of the country. Since immigration was almost negligible, Mexico's population redistribution is the immediate result of these internal migratory movements.

A study by Cabrera (1976) that divided the country into 107 regions confirms these important geographic shifts in population for the 1960-1970 period. All the 107 regions increased their population, but the average annual rate of increase ranged from 0.2 per cent to 13 per cent. Net migration among the regions rose to 3.2 million and was most highly concentrated in the places of arrival. More than 1.3 million

Table 3. Distribution of population by regions, 1940-1980  
(Percentage)

Regions *	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
I	6.2	6.7	7.4	8.1	8.2
II	11.2	11.4	11.4	11.1	10.8
III	10.5	10.7	10.7	10.9	10.9
IV	7.2	6.6	6.0	5.3	5.0
V	18.9	17.9	17.8	16.8	15.9
VI	13.7	12.9	11.7	10.8	10.7
VII	14.7	17.2	19.3	22.4	24.5
VIII	17.6	16.6	15.7	14.6	14.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(19 649 12)	(25 779 254)	(34 923 129)	(48 381 547)	(66 846 833)

\* The regions are composed of:

- |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>I. Northwest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baja California</li> <li>Baja California Sur</li> <li>Nayarit</li> <li>Sinaloa</li> </ul> | <p>V. West-Central:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colima</li> <li>Guanajuato</li> <li>Jalisco</li> <li>Michoacán</li> </ul>                                                                |
| <p>II. North:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coahuila</li> <li>Chihuahua</li> <li>Durango</li> <li>Nuevo León</li> </ul>                  | <p>VI. Central:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hidalgo</li> <li>Morelos</li> <li>Querétaro</li> <li>Tlaxcala</li> </ul>                                                                     |
| <p>III. Gulf:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tamaulipas</li> <li>Veracruz</li> </ul>                                                      | <p>VII. Valley of Mexico</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distrito Federal</li> <li>Estado de México</li> </ul>                                                                               |
| <p>IV. North-Central:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aguascalientes</li> <li>San Luis Potosí</li> <li>Zacatecas</li> </ul>                | <p>VIII. South and South-east</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campeche</li> <li>Chiapas</li> <li>Guerrero</li> <li>Oaxaca</li> <li>Quintana Roo</li> <li>Tabasco</li> <li>Yucatán</li> </ul> |

Sources: For 1940-1970, Luis Unikel and others, El desarrollo urbano en México (México, El Colegio de México, 1976); for 1980, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática. Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto, X Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 1980 (1984).

migrants, or 41.5 per cent of the total, settled in Mexico City and environs; the metropolitan areas of Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla and Acapulco absorbed another 750,000 migrants, or 23.5 per cent of the total. This indicates that 65 per cent of the net shift in population went to five cities. There were no important migratory movements to rural areas. Temporary or seasonal movements, or very short-distance migration were not considered in this study.

In the 1940-1970 period, population concentration was mainly due to expansion of large cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants, especially of Mexico City. The number of large cities went up from 6 in 1940 to 35 in 1970 and their population increased from 3.5 to 17.4 million. The share of population in these cities rapidly increased from 11.9 per cent in 1940 to 35.2 per cent in 1970. The metropolitan area of Mexico City comprised 8 per cent of the country's population in 1940, and 22 per cent in 1970. The number of medium and small urban centres with 15,000 to 100,000 inhabitants rose from 49 to 143, although their share of total population changed very little: 8 per cent in 1940 and 9.5 per cent in 1970.

The urban population expansion is largely due to the natural growth of urban population. In the 1950-1960 period, urban population grew by 4.9 million, of which 3.1 million, or 63.9 per cent, was due to excess of births over deaths among persons residing in urban centres. This trend became more pronounced in the 1960-1970 period, when the urban population gained 8.4 million, of which natural increase - regardless of length of residence of city dwellers - accounted for 5.7 million, or 67.4 per cent, and in migration for only 32.6 per cent. However, this does not account for the contribution of recent in-migrants to urban births. 9/

An examination of city size shows that in the period 1940 to 1970 there was a single giant, Mexico City, which dominated national life and around which all other cities and the country as a whole gravitated. Only two other cities, Monterrey and Guadalajara, seemed to exercise a certain degree of dominance, which classifies them as subdominant cities of regional influence. These three metropolises served as focal points for the country's activities (Unikel, 1976).

Notwithstanding this urban concentration, in 1970 Mexico still had 94,000 widely dispersed localities with less than 2,500 inhabitants, of which 90,200 had under 1,000 inhabitants, compared with 104,800 and 102,900 localities, respectively in 1940. As mentioned earlier, in the rural localities of less than 2,500 inhabitants, population increased in absolute numbers from 13.7 million in 1940 to 19.4 million in 1970; and in localities with under 1,000, from 9.8 to 13.5 million. These

increases in rural population, despite massive migration from the countryside to cities, can only be understood in terms of Mexico's overall accelerated natural population growth.

In addition to internal migration during this period, many Mexican workers crossed the border into the United States. Most of them migrated back and forth seasonally, with only a minority emigrating permanently. This movement of temporary workers was the object of legal agreements by both countries between 1942 and 1964. During this 22-year period, the number of work contracts has been estimated at more than 4 million. However, the number of Mexican workers involved in this flow is much less as a great many of them were yearly repeaters. After the end of the Bracero Program in 1964, the movement continued undocumented, given the persistence of the diverging economic and demographic forces in place on both sides of the border between the United States and Mexico.

#### B. Current demographic trends

The population of Mexico reached 69.4 million inhabitants in 1980 and 80 million by late 1986 and its population growth stands now only slightly above 2 per cent, which is one third lower than the rate slightly above 3 per cent prevailing in the early 1970s. In just over one decade, between 1970 and the mid-1980s, fertility appears to have declined substantially. The estimated crude birth rate went down from 43.9 in the 1970-1972 period to 30.4 in 1983 (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985, p. 26). Data from the National Demographic Survey conducted in 1982 indicate a total fertility rate of 4.3 in 1981, at least two fewer children per woman than was the case in the early seventies. As can be seen in tables 4 and 5, the 1982 survey showed fertility rates in all age groups were moving downwards. The most recent estimate of fertility has indicated a total fertility rate of 4.0 in 1985 (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1986).

Mortality has declined more slowly than fertility. The crude death rate was 9.3 in 1970-1972 and was estimated at 7.5 in 1983, while life expectancy at birth gained barely more than two additional years for men, from 60 to 62.3 and about the same for women, from 64 to 66.1 years (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1982). Mortality in Mexico is slightly higher than indicated by some observed statistics, particularly as regards infant mortality where there still is a considerable under-reporting of deaths of infants. In 1980 the infant mortality rate was estimated above 50 deaths per thousand births (58.4 for infant boys and 47.5 for infant girls), which is higher than the 42.7 and 34.1, respectively recorded in the vital statistics for 1979-1981 (Camposortega, 1984). Infants still die from traditional infectious and parasitic diseases; close to half of infant deaths in 1980 were attributed to these causes (Perez Astorga, 1984).

Table 4. Fertility estimates, 1970-1981

Year	Total fertility rate	Crude birth rate (per 1,000)
1970	6.7	46
1975-1976	5.7	41
1979	4.7	36
1981	4.3	33

Sources: Encuesta Mexicana de Fecundidad, 1976; Encuesta Nacional de Prevalencia en el Uso de Métodos Anticonceptivos, 1979; Encuesta Nacional Demográfica, 1982. Taken from Francisco Alba and Joseph E. Potter, "Population and development in Mexico since 1940: an interpretation", Population and Development Review, vol. 12, No. 1 (March 1986).

Table 5. Age-specific fertility rates, 1970-1981 (3-year moving averages)

Age group	1970	1975	1981 a/
15-19	.124	.116	.106
20-24	.304	.263	.203
25-29	.335	.283	.211
30-34	.260	.245	.172
35-39	.215	.148	.122
40-44	(.101) <sup>b/</sup>	.092	.043
45-49	(.019) <sup>c/</sup>	(.019) <sup>c/</sup>	.018
T.F.R.	6.790	5.830	4.375

Source: Consejo Nacional de México, Resultados principales de la Encuesta Nacional Demográfica de 1982.

a/ 1980 and 1981 average.

b/ 1973 rate.

c/ 1979 rate.

The trend in spatial distribution of population during the 1970s saw a continuation of the pattern already observed in previous decades, namely, the coexistence of high concentration and considerable dispersion of the population. The most recent data do not indicate any major changes away from this pattern. In 1980, population in localities with 15,000 and more inhabitants represented 51.8 per cent of the total population. The urban population increased during the 1970-1980 decade by 13 million, out of a total increase of 19 million in Mexico's population. The Valley of Mexico region (VII) continued to increase its population share while the northern regions (I and II) kept theirs. The three major urban areas - Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey - increased their share of total population from 23.4 per cent in 1970 (11.3 million) to 26.3 per cent in 1980 (17.5 million). The Mexico City metropolitan area alone increased its population from 8.6 to 13.3 million. <sup>10/</sup> At the other extreme, the population living in localities with less than 1,000 inhabitants also increased by 1.8 million (with the number of localities increasing from 90,000 in 1970 to 118,000 in 1980). Thus, the basic features of the territorial distribution of the population remained undisturbed.

However, many medium-sized cities are currently growing more rapidly than the three largest metropolitan areas. In the decade of the 1970s, the rate of annual growth of the 18 most dynamic medium-sized cities is estimated at 6.9 per cent versus an estimate of 6.0 per cent for Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey. <sup>11/</sup> In other words, Mexico is experiencing the consolidation of a more complex urban system, and probably moving towards a more balanced one (Graizbord, 1986).

There has been mounting concern among population experts about the uneven nature of population behaviour between social groups and regions. This is obviously akin to the traditional issue of mortality and fertility differentials; nevertheless, the regional differentials have gained relevance owing to the fact that the attainment of population goals at the normal level are naturally linked with state and regional trends. For example, the regional demographic policy developed in 1978 set forward proposals of national population growth compatible with different regional mortality and fertility levels. One of the aims was to reduce the differentials in fertility observed in the initial phases of the fertility transition and another was to limit population growth including in-migration, to not more than 4.5 per cent in any single state. <sup>12/</sup>

The current National Population Program, 1984-1988, notes that notwithstanding the great and pervasive decline in mortality levels since 1940, the differentials at the state level were quite large in 1980. Crude death rates ranged from below 6 per thousand in states with the lowest levels to above 10 per thousand in the states with the



highest levels; while the national crude death rate stands at 7.5 per thousand. Infant mortality rates show similar or even greater regional differentials.

In 1980 there was a very strong inverse association between mortality levels, measured by crude death rates, and a series of conventional socio-economic indicators, including number of inhabitants per physician, levels of education, population not covered by drinking water and sewerage facilities, urban population and population engaged in non-primary activities (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985).

The recent fertility decline has also been accompanied by significant regional differences. Between 1940 and 1970, the crude birth rate exceeded 40 births per thousand in all the regions of the country. In 1980, however, the crude birth rate in the region with lowest fertility was below 30, while in the region with highest fertility it was still well above the 40 births per thousand, although some of this difference may have been accounted for by differing age structure. There is a significant association at the regional level between fertility levels and several socio-economic indicators. Fertility is inversely related to proportions urban, proportions educated (literacy and years of schooling), female labour force participation, and contraceptive use (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985, pp. 19-21).

Despite the association between regional fertility levels and socio-economic conditions, there are indications that the fertility decline in México has been greatest among less-educated and rural women, who are the groups that initially had the highest fertility. In consequence, fertility differentials narrowed between 1976 and 1982 when fertility was falling fastest, i.e., from a total fertility rate of 5.7 to 4.4. The least educated (less than four years schooling) experienced a 31 per cent decline from 6.74 children to 4.66, and for rural women the total fertility rate declined from 6.68 to 4.86, or 27 per cent. By comparison, the total fertility rate for urban women dropped from 4.20 to 3.36, or 20 per cent (Pullum, Casterline and Juarez, 1985).

This decline has been attributed mainly to increased contraceptive practice rather than to the other principal intermediate variables determining fertility. Table 6 shows the proportions of women in conjugal union who practice contraception and the distribution of these women by method of contraception. The proportion increased from 29 per cent in 1976 to 48 per cent in 1982, a 66 per cent change. The pill was and continues to be the most important method and commands around a third of the users. IUD and injectables account for another quarter. At the same time, female sterilization has gained ground, from 7 per cent to 29 per cent among current users, at the expense of other less effective or traditional methods.

Table 6. Women in conjugal unions practicing contraception; distribution of practice by method, 1976-1982 (Percentages)

	1976	1979	1982
Women practicing contraception	29	38	48
<u>Distribution by method</u>			
Pills	37	33	30
IUD or injectables	25	22	24
Sterilization	7	24	29
Other	31	21	17
Total	100	100	100

Sources: Encuesta Mexicana de Fecundidad, 1976; Encuesta Nacional de Prevalencia en el Uso de Métodos Anticonceptivos, 1979; Encuesta Nacional Demográfica, 1982; taken from Francisco Alba and Joseph E. Potter, "Population and development in Mexico since 1940: an interpretation", Population and Development Review, vol. 12, No. 1 (March 1986).

During the 1970s and 1980s Mexicans continued to cross the border to the United States. Their numbers are difficult to ascertain. Legally admitted Mexicans averaged 60,000 annually, but estimates of the number of undocumented Mexican immigrants in the United States, are quite disparate. Available evidence from the 1980 United States Census suggests that each year, approximately 100,000 undocumented migrants make the United States their habitual place of residence (Passel and Woodrow, 1984). An additional group is the migratory workers whose habitual place of residence is Mexico. Recent estimates on the total number of this type of undocumented worker indicate about three quarters of a million temporary migrant workers. <sup>13/</sup> This migratory labour flow continues to be temporary. The majority of those who leave Mexico return after relatively short periods of time, usually less than a year. <sup>14/</sup> The volume of returned migration, whether legal or undocumented, is unknown. New findings on Mexican transborder migrants cast doubt on the idea that Mexican migration to the United States is almost exclusively the result of rural poverty. One important factor is

the United States demand for a diversified labour force and the fact that differences between the two countries create tensions and disequilibriums underlying these migratory flows.

In recent years, Mexico has also experienced the influx of other people to its borders. During the 1970s, the country had an open door policy towards citizens of several Latin American countries, who were skilled people displaced by political changes and violence. A more complex and heterogeneous influx is the flow from several Central American countries. The old temporary flow of Guatemalan workers to pick seasonal crops in the southern state of Chiapas, was augmented after 1980 by important and sizeable new flows, and by 1985 there were around 40,000 Guatemalan refugees. Estimates indicate that as many as one million additional immigrants were displaced by political violence, insecurity or economic hardship in the region. Of this number, it is difficult to assess how many remain in the country and how many just cross the country on their way to the United States. These transient international migrants are a significant new development, posing problems for Mexico and the migrants themselves.

## II. POPULATION POLICY SITUATION

### A. Formulation

The current national population policy has its legal foundation in the General Population Law of 1974. <sup>15/</sup> Whereas a previous law (of 1947) had sought to encourage population growth by reducing mortality and encouraging births and immigration, the 1974 law called for a programme to stabilize and regulate population growth in order to improve the use of the nation's human and natural resources. A general shift in attitudes followed the announcement of the new government policy, and subsequently the Government created the National Population Council (CONAPO) as the State body responsible for the formulation of programmes to implement the national population policy.

When formulating its population policy, Mexico made it clear that population policy was conceived of as covering a broad range of activities to cope with the effects of demographic change and to identify and alter the causes of undesirable demographic behaviour.

The intention was to establish a comprehensive national population policy that was not limited just to population growth, but that would cover the full range of population variables including size, composition, and spatial distribution. Over the past decade, a broad view of population policy has evolved, incorporating several other issues which are recognized to be critical to national development, including the status of women, quality of life and social equity.

In a statement prepared by President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado for the International Conference on Population, held at Mexico City in August 1984, it is clear that the Government viewed population policy as a fundamental instrument for development:

"The population policy of the Government of Mexico is based on the social and political policy enshrined in the Constitution and has been enriched by a broad and far-reaching process of consultations and popular participation. In my Government, we have tried to integrate the population dimensions into all aspects of development policy since, on the one hand, the incorporation of demographic variables is necessary for all programmes and activities and, on the other hand, population is the subject, object and fundamental dimension of the process of social change. According to the National Plan, 'population, the central element of development strategy, is considered in its direct relationship to economic activity in general and the growth of employment, both in the reordering of the

economy and the transformation of the country's structures'. In conformity with this strategy, population programmes comprise activities in all spheres of economic and social life and are given priority in the following areas: population education, family planning, integrated development of the family, population growth and distribution, integration of women into development, integrated development of indigenous groups and research into population and development" (United Nations Fund for Population Activities, 1985).

Article 1 of the General Law on Population enacted in January 1974, states that its purpose is "to regulate the elements that affect the population ... so that all people may share fairly and equally in the benefits of economic and social development". To this end, article 3 of the law lists several measures: to carry out family planning programmes, to promote the full integration of marginal groups, and to direct population movements among the different regions of the republic. Article 4 stresses that population policy must not violate human rights: "Men and women are equal before the law. The law will protect the organization and development of the family. All persons have the right to decide in a free, responsible and informed way on the number and spacing of their children." At the same time, the Health Code was revised to lift the previous ban on advertising and selling contraceptives.

On the issue of spatial distribution, the Law on Human Settlements (20 May 1976) sought to modify territorial distribution through guiding the placement of economic and social activities. This effort was carried out in various schemes, such as the differential regional incentives contained in the Industrial Development Plan, differential energy prices and through other taxes and subsidies (Secretaría de Patrimonio y Fomento Industrial, 1979).

The Mexican Constitution provides a philosophical, political and social framework that has guided population policy, which has been viewed as a tool for advancing a fuller participation and realization of the social and individual rights granted to all citizens by the Constitution. Among the rights most relevant to population policy are the rights to education, to shelter and housing, to work, to health and to information. The ultimate stated aim of the population policy is to raise the quality of life of the population (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985).

In line with the principles of the Constitution concerning individual rights, population policy formulation is constrained by the requirement that it should respect individual liberty and personal

conscience in general, and specifically in the domain of fertility and migration. In other words, any programmatic action intended to modify demographic tendencies has to be framed within the context of free movement of people and free decisions of couples and families.

However, the guarantee of individual freedom does not mean that societal needs are overlooked in the formulation of Mexican population policy. This is fully compatible with the prevailing Mexican political philosophy that gives the Government (State) active direction in economic and social affairs. Two related considerations that affect formulation of the population policy follow from this principle. First, national sovereignty in this matter is explicitly stated, i.e., the population policy belongs to the realm of the national interest, a realm reserved to the Mexican State and to the Mexican society to decide upon. Second, the criteria and actions aimed at influencing demographic phenomena extend to the country as a whole, as well as to all its sectors, groups and regions.

The provisions and regulations of the national General Population Law define the general principles and basic criteria of population policy. The National Population Council (CONAPO) is in charge of overseeing and co-ordinating the implementation of the law's principles and of the governmental objectives.

Population policy is also viewed as an integral part of general development programming. The general guidelines of population policy are stated in the National Development Plan that each administration is required under article 21 of the Planning Law of 1983 to present within the first six months of its six year term. In the 1983-1988 National Development Plan, the population policy was considered an important factor contributing to the developmental goals of the Plan, namely, to raise the quality of life of the population and to protect the welfare of all citizens. A major goal of the Plan is the regulation of demographic processes with the double aim of influencing natural population growth, in a free, gradual and differentiated manner and enhancing the general welfare of the population.

The National Population Program in turn specifies and elaborates the population objectives of the National Development Plan. <sup>16/</sup> The National Population Program, 1984-1988 (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985), encompassed three specific objectives:

(a) To regulate the pace of population growth, attempting to achieve greater equilibrium between the demographic dynamics and the economic and social developmental process;

(b) To rationalize the distribution of the population within the national territory in a framework of a more balanced rural-urban and regional development;

(c) To strive for an active and equal participation of the diverse groups and sectors of the population in national development, in order to satisfy basic needs in food, housing, health and education.

The 1974 population law established CONAPO as the agency responsible for formulating population policy. 17/ In order to promote broad consensus and to avoid policy formulation by an isolated unit, a number of ministries have seats on its governing board, including the ministries of education, foreign relations, labour and social welfare, programming and budget, agrarian reform and health, treasury and public credit and urban development, while CONAPO itself is located within the Ministry of Interior. Policy formulation is thus a multisectoral activity including most of the key sectors related to population affairs.

#### B. Implementation

The implementation of population policy combines centralized and decentralized elements. As previously mentioned, the National Population Council (CONAPO) determines targets and co-ordinates implementation, but does not, as a rule, run the programmes intended to directly influence population. Instead, labour is divided between various institutions and entities, and field activities in population are performed by other agencies, though usually with CONAPO's involvement. In addition to formulating policy, CONAPO has an important role as promoter and negotiator, with the responsibility of ensuring that programmes conducted by other agencies comply with CONAPO's guidelines, including agencies at the federal, state and county level, as well as private institutions. 18/

Because most programmes are not implemented directly by CONAPO, there is an enormous amount of potential co-operation between CONAPO and the different agencies involved in population matters. While the establishment of norms and the co-ordination of criteria for action are centralized functions and elements, the actions and activities themselves are decentralized and sectoral. The aim is to secure the active participation at all levels of all interested sectors, social groups and private institutions.

This strategy seems to have been successful in making socially and administratively acceptable the national goals and demographic programmes set by the federal Government. Population programmes and activities are not all of CONAPO's making, although usually they are



consistent with CONAPO's demographic goals and objectives. The implementation of the policy and its programmes conform to the medium-range programmes and general framework of governmental planning set by the Ministry of Programming and Budget (SPP) (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985, p.7).

During the last administration (1976-1982), demographic goals and quantitative targets were set that transcended that administration's period in office. <sup>19/</sup> The administration attempted to influence population processes in a longer-term perspective extending to the turn of the century (i.e., a 25-year target). The comprehensive policy formulated by CONAPO in 1977 was contemplated to be implemented by stages. The first stage aimed at reducing the rate of population growth from 3.2 per cent in 1977 to 2.5 per cent in 1982, to 1.8 per cent by 1988, and to 1 per cent by the year 2000 (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1977).

These targets were to be achieved through the vigorous implementation of various programmes. On the one hand, there were direct intervention programmes providing family planning information, education and delivery of services. These family planning programmes were to be integrated with other social and public health programmes, especially maternal and child health. On the other hand, indirect intervention programmes aimed at attitudinal change were to rely upon broad communications and education programmes concerning population and development.

Once the policy had been adopted and the quantitative goals set, a target population to be served by family planning services was determined. Details of the strategy spelled out in the National Plan for Family Planning were to be implemented by an office of co-ordination for the National Family Planning Program (CPNPF), an agency also established by the 1976-1982 administration. <sup>20/</sup>

Responsibility for the family planning programme, devolved on the Ministry of Health, while the Ministry of Education became responsible for most of the programmes on communication, on population and family planning and sex education. General guidelines and orientations were elaborated by CONAPO with the participation of other institutions, and subsequently the plans were carried out by other institutions with the support and collaboration of CONAPO's personnel.

The same principles guiding policy implementation are exemplified by the regional demographic policy (1978-1982) that attempted to change migratory flows with the aim of achieving better co-ordination between the distribution of the population and the distribution of natural and economic resources in the territory. This goal was linked to the

objectives of various other plans including the National Plan of Urban Development, the National Agrarian Plan, the National Industrialization Plan, the National Plan of Administrative Reform and a number of other plans. 21/

Under the current National Population Program, 1984-1988, CONAPO has continued in its co-ordinating role to the point that one could say that there is a stable and here-to-stay consensus on population policy implementation. The National Population Program explicitly states that point based on the general conception that population and development are interrelated in a complex way. Accordingly, the implementation of the policy is conceived accordingly as a multi-sectoral activity, which includes programmes that touch upon the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions. Ideally, the implementation of the policy goes beyond the co-ordination of specific programmes to embrace the planning process itself, and includes the incorporation of demographic variables and projections as inputs to sectoral and regional planning, the determination of the trends and intensity of the demographic impact of diverse economic and social programmes, and the definition of those complementary and specific actions needed to induce increasing balance between the demographic dynamics and economic potential (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985, p. 27-28).

Mexico's implementation of population policy is thus conceived to reach beyond the conventionally defined demographic variables and demographic-related programmes (fertility, mortality, migration, nuptiality etc.) to include other dimensions, corresponding to programmes in nutrition, health education, employment, the provision of public services and housing. Based on this approach, the National Population Program, 1984-1988, consists of seven specific programmes as follows:

- (a) National Program of Dynamics and Distribution of the Population;
- (b) National Family Planning Program;
- (c) National Program on Population Education;
- (d) National Program on Development of the Family;
- (e) National Program on Population for the Indigenous Groups;
- (f) National Action Program for the Integration of Women in Development;
- (g) National Research Program on Population and Development.

(Consejo Nacional de Poblacion, 1985, pp. 29-31).

Programmes (a) and (b) are intended to directly influence the socio-demographic variables; (c) is intended to affect socio-cultural variables; (d), (e) and (f) are intended to affect both socio-demographic and cultural variables in specific societal groups; and (g) is intended to conduct research.

The programmes provide a framework for the co-ordination of diverse activities. The execution of each one of them falls under the respective operative programmes of different entities. The National Population Program, 1984-1988, mentions three levels of execution of individual programmes. At a first, or compulsory level, the participating agencies are the ministries and the decentralized public institutions. The second, or co-ordinative level, involves the participation of state governments and local or municipal authorities. The aim of this co-ordination is to establish the population programmes in state and other local jurisdictions and to impose quality controls over programme performance. Finally, at the "concertación" or co-operative level, CONAPO encourages activities conducive to the objectives of the different programmes among civic organizations, private institutions and other social associations.

The co-ordination agreements between CONAPO and the state and municipal authorities favour the creation of state population councils, headed by the state governor and integrated with representatives of state and federal agencies as well as representatives from the social and private sectors. The idea is that these councils establish appropriate mechanisms, and implement the appropriate actions for the execution of the agreed upon population-related objectives. These agreements are valid for a one-year period and are, therefore, subject to annual revision. The major collaborative endeavours contemplated in the National Population Program include: updating the state socio-demographic reports, elaboration of population projections, making an inventory of social needs and programmes of actions to cover them, providing technical assistance in the execution of the population programmes, and co-operating in the assessment of the demographic impact of sectoral and regional development programmes (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985, p. 61).

The idea behind the collaborative agreements with public and private sector organizations is to secure wider popular participation in the activities related to population policy. Some of the organizations include labour and agrarian unions, co-operative societies, industrial and commercial chambers, academic institutions and civic associations in general. The particular programme adopted by each particular organization depends on its nature, and consequently there is a diversity of programmes. In all instances, CONAPO provides technical and other assistance (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985 pp. 63-64).

### C. Evaluation

As with the implementation of population programmes, the evaluation of population policy is also a multi-track process. There are two forms of evaluation. First, CONAPO has the legal responsibility to oversee population policy and programmes performance. <sup>22/</sup> Second, given the fact that CONAPO has basically normative and co-ordinating functions, the institutions in charge of the diverse activities are also responsible for the evaluation of their own programmes. The fact that these programmes are under the auspices of the different ministries and other agencies implies that the evaluation of the programmes is also in the hands of these institutions, usually with the participation of CONAPO.

After a decade of experience a division of labour has evolved concerning the evaluation functions to be performed. CONAPO's functions refer mainly to conducting analysis needed to determine and evaluate national objectives and goals and to setting priorities and assessing the viability of specific programmes. Major evaluation instruments have included studies (e.g., surveys) to gauge the effects of programmes on the overall level of demographic variables. However, these activities are to be distinguished from the "operational evaluation" of the technical and administrative aspects of the services rendered. This operational evaluation is carried out by the diverse institutions that directly deliver the services. Ideally, a common information source should provide all the data needed to carry out these two types of evaluation. This common information source would be operated directly by the institutions delivering the services, in co-ordination with the National Population Council.

The past administration contemplated the creation of a Permanent Evaluation Committee on family planning integrated by CONAPO, the National Family Planning Coordination (an organism that was dissolved in 1980), and the various institutions that actually delivered the services. The aim was to obtain enough information and technical expertise to take appropriate action concerning family planning targets, the evolution of the different programme components, and effectiveness in reaching the national demographic goals (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1977, pp. 63-64).

This approach was maintained in the 1984-1988 National Population Programme, which proposed that in agreement between CONAPO and the institutions responsible for the operation of the programme, a model of registry of information and statistics should be created and complemented by special studies, with appropriate corrective measures to be taken by the diverse ministries involved, especially the Inter-institutional Group on Family Planning of the Health Sector Cabinet. <sup>23/</sup>

Many evaluations are internal affairs that are carried out as routine activities of the institutions. However, evaluations of a general character have been published as a by-product of various surveys carried out since the mid-1970s to estimate the results of the population programme. These data have been made broadly available to the interested parties.

### III. ASSESSMENT OF EFFORTS TO CONTROL POPULATION GROWTH

The Mexican Government has made it clear since the change of its official population stance that its two overriding priorities in population policy are to harmonize population growth and population distribution with economic and social development. This dual emphasis is embedded in the General Population Law of 1974, and has continually been restated in policy statements by three successive Governments.

The first formal document where the population policy took specific programmatic shape states:

"The demographic policy here presented is integrated by two fundamental objectives: on the one hand, to induce a fertility reduction, fully respecting individual freedom, and, through it, a decrease of population growth; on the other hand, to rationalize the distribution of migratory movements to attempt to achieve a settlement pattern conducive to a more balanced regional development" (Consejo Nacional de Poblacion, 1977).

The current National Population Programme echoes the traditional position of the Mexican Government that categorically rejects the idea of limiting population policy to the control of population growth. Although "the regulation of the rate of population growth" continues to be one of the major specific objectives of the programme, the other equally important objective is "the rationalization of the population distribution in the national territory within a framework of a more balanced rural, urban and regional development" (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1985).

The strategies to alter population distribution have been comprehensive. Their objectives include slowing primate city and other metropolitan area growth, promotion of medium-size or intermediate cities, development of selected regions (northern border region and other regions either of great potential or lagging), and rural development (rain-fed areas) among others. A wide variety of policy instruments have been used: public infrastructure subsidies and controls on industrial location; direct state investment; industrial corridors and parks; and various rural development programmes. The destructive earthquakes of September 1985 strengthened the political will to decentralize federal public administration. Programmes already under way to decentralize the federal administrative machinery are being supported by decisions to relocate entire governmental agencies from Mexico City to other sites. Despite these efforts, Mexico's population

policy appears to have been more successful in modifying population growth than in altering spatial distribution. The present report will be confined to assessing the effort to control population growth.

Based on the premise that it was in the nation's interest to limit population growth, successive administrations have laid down guidelines and instituted specific population programmes to attain that goal. In deference to the sensitive nature of the issue, and in the interest of building a broad social consensus, the Mexican Government emphasized that the programmes would not be coercive. <sup>24/</sup> The free decisions and liberty of people would be officially protected, and the effort would not be unisectoral. CONAPO, charged with setting guidelines, has increasingly secured the participation of a broad range of government agencies in the family planning effort. A diversity of programmes have complemented one another. Thus, the support for family planning programmes has become part of wider efforts to reduce mortality, to improve the status of women, to raise educational levels, and to promote the incorporation of marginal groups into the mainstream of national development.

Family planning was initially promoted by several government agencies. Beginning in 1973, the Ministry of Health (Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia or SSA) and the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) rapidly extended the delivery of family planning services through their respective networks of health centres and hospitals. <sup>25/</sup> Each programme had its own features and goals. By the end of 1976 considerable headway had been made in advertising the availability of these services. But these actions were undertaken largely within the confines of the respective institutions, with CONAPO in charge of general co-ordination decisions on smaller family size. The training of medical and paramedical personnel, and research were under the Ministry of Health and of the IMSS.

The Lopez Portillo administration (1976-1982) gave evidence of its commitment to attaining a demographic target of 2.5 per cent population growth in 1982, and 1 per cent in the year 2000 by expanding the family planning programme through such activities as mass media campaigns and adding population-related subjects to the educational curricula, while establishing an additional co-ordinating agency to integrate the efforts of the various health sector institutions in carrying out the National Family Planning Programme. <sup>26/</sup>

The change that actually took place in the population's reproductive behaviour was substantial and is well documented. Between 1970 and 1981, the total fertility rate fell by about 39 per cent from 6.7 to 4.3. Fertility was falling fastest between 1976 and 1981 when

rates went down from 5.7 in 1976 to 4.7 in 1979 and to 4.3 in 1981. These estimates are based on the results of three large national fertility surveys conducted in 1976, 1979 and early 1982.

The Government's actions have been directed by the position, taken in the initial legislation, that the family planning programmes were to be strictly voluntary, and that the approach to alter the population's behaviour was to be multisectoral and multifaceted. The Government's activities that might have helped to change fertility behaviour were:

(a) Developing an effective contraceptive distribution system;

(b) Mounting extensive information, education and communications activities publicizing fertility and family-size issues, and promoting the image of the small family;

(c) Mobilizing the first and second level health practitioners in public institutions to counsel and persuade their clients to accept and practice contraception. 27/

The large and rapid increase in the availability of contraceptives achieved by the government programme resulted not only from instituting and extending family planning activities in different public institutions providing health services, but also of extending the coverage and reach of these institutions. Both the Echeverría (1970-1976) and Lopez Portillo (1976-1982) administrations made large investments in the health sector that led to increases in the number of installations and the number of personnel. The most notable investment of this type involved the establishment of 2,714 rural health posts and 21 rural hospitals between 1979 and 1981. This effort was accompanied by attempts to reach communities that did not have access to the institutional health system, and the recruitment and training of community health practitioners and traditional mid-wives. 28/ Moreover, as of late 1980, family planning services offered by the urban IMSS clinics were made available free of charge to persons not formally enrolled in its social security systems.

The evaluation of hospital performance with respect to the number of new users has probably played an important part in motivating health sector personnel to persuade their clients to accept and practice contraception.

The Government's strategy in promoting a transformation in reproductive behaviour has been to emphasize not only the benefits of family planning and smaller families, but also to promote sex education, and to enhance the position of women in the family and the labour market. Mass media materials and texts used in the educational system



were revised to reflect this message. Maternal and child health care programmes have been components of family planning programmes since their inception. The Government has always seen health and family planning as closely linked, mutually reinforcing elements of population change. On the other hand, education, especially for women, has been recognized as an important determinant of lower demand for large families, and of individual and family advancement. On this point, population policy has taken into account the diverse attitudes and values of the population.

In implementing the family planning programme the Government has stressed a comprehensive approach. This is clearly evident in the three components that form the National Family Planning Programme, 1985-1988: education on family planning; information and communication; and health services in family planning. The objective of the programme is to promote changes through these three elements in the socio-cultural values and in reproductive behaviour in order to increase the welfare of the individual, family and community. Specific objectives are: access and availability of services; information, orientation and motivation in family planning; improving maternal and child health; reducing fertility levels and prevention of abortion. Planning, implementation and evaluation of these three components are the responsibility of the Ministries of Education, Interior and Health. The overall co-ordination rests in CONAPO, which also sees that other programmes - specifically, the National Programme on Population Education, the National Programme on Population for the Family, and the National Programme on Population and Development Research - contribute to the objectives of the family planning programme (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1977 and 1985).

The data gathered from the fertility surveys are consistent with the notion that the various elements of the Government's policy were quite successful. The 1982 survey indicates that slightly more than half of the contraceptive users at that time were supplied through public sources. The attractiveness of a public source is clearly related to the price of the method. Thus, 70 per cent of sterilizations were performed in government clinics or hospitals, and an even larger percentage of IUDs were inserted in these facilities. The private sector, on the other hand, is the source of more than 65 per cent of less expensive hormonal contraceptives (pills and injectables).

There are still very sizeable differentials in fertility and contraceptive use in relation to education and rural or urban residence, and within urban and rural areas according to occupational or social groups. <sup>29/</sup> These differentials would have been greater, and the overall pace of fertility decline slower, if the Government had not committed itself to meeting and inducing demand for lower fertility through the provision of family planning services, education and

communication through various institutional programmes. Without these programmes, large numbers of women in the rural population were unlikely to have had access to modern contraception because of their geographical isolation, economic conditions and cultural heritage.

#### IV. INTERNATIONAL COMPONENT

Mexico has repeatedly stressed the right of every nation to formulate its population policies according to its own circumstances. Nevertheless, Mexico has also emphasized international co-operation in population matters, consistent with its long tradition of recourse to international bodies to discuss and solve global and regional issues.

Developed prior to the United Nations World Population Conference, 1974, held at Bucharest, Mexico's population policy bears a close resemblance in content and philosophy to the World Population Plan of Action (United Nations, 1975, chap. I). It emphasizes the interdependence of population and development, respect for the individual liberty and the sovereignty of nations. Over the years following the Conference, Mexico has been frequently cited as a successful example of population policy adoption and implementation. 30/

The second United Nations International Conference on Population, 1984, which took place at Mexico City, can be considered a further step in the efforts to define and agree on global strategies that would complement national population policies and programmes. Mexico was one of the sponsor countries of the Mexico City Declaration on Population and Development, which was adopted by consensus (United Nations, 1984, chap. I, sect. A).

From a variety of official statements it is clear that Mexico considers itself to be an active, responsive and engaged member of the international community of nations regarding population issues. Its position has always been that the growing interdependence between nations demands international co-operation to enhance national population programmes. Mexico also acknowledges the need to establish national and international strategies that take into consideration the relationships linking population, resources, environment, social and economic development, individual well-being and quality of life. In opening the proceedings of the International Conference on Population, 1984, the President of Mexico stated that "it is imperative to strengthen the awareness of a common destiny of the developed world and of the less favoured countries".

In the area of international co-operation, Mexico has received technical and financial assistance from various bodies of the United Nations system, particularly from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Co-operation has also been received from a few national agencies and other international institutions. In negotiating with external agencies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) plays an important role in assisting CONAPO's efforts in the area of international co-operation.

Over the years, Mexico has hosted numerous international and regional conferences, and in the regional meetings sponsored by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), has contributed to developing regional approaches and positions.

Regarding the migration of Mexican workers to the United States, the Mexican Government has indicated that this movement should be properly approached by both societies. The Mexican Government has asked that its undocumented workers be accorded full respect and exercise of their human and labour rights and their rights to services. At the International Conference on Population, 1984, Mexico stated that

"International migration is an important issue for our country. The movement of Mexican workers to the United States is a function of conditions generated by demand and supply of this labour force. The Mexican Government has in all cases attempted realistic solutions, emphasizing the importance of a bilateral understanding as recommended in the Plan of Action approved in Bucharest. Acknowledging the magnitude of the problem, Mexico is convinced that through dialogue and permanent consultation, it is possible to find solutions that do not affect the sovereign decisions of the countries, nor fundamental human rights".

Regarding the temporary workers, mostly of Guatemalan origin, that cross the southern border to nearby Mexican fields, the Government makes efforts to guarantee their human and labour rights. Regarding the persons fleeing from the critical situation in Central America, Mexico seeks to give them protection and security. This endeavour represents Mexico's traditional position in providing asylum for politically displaced persons in this area. The Government has worked in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. 31/

## V. CONCLUSIONS

In the period since 1973, the Government of Mexico has increasingly recognized population as an area of policy interest and development. From the start, population policy formulation and implementation have been deliberately integrated with other development programmes, and the Government has avoided treating population policy in isolation. The dominant perception on population issues that guides programme formulation is based on two important considerations. At the macro-level, there is the assumption that linkages exist between population, development, resources and environment. At the micro-level there is the assumption that, given the interconnection between socio-economic variables and demographic variables, population programmes cannot be only demographic in nature, and that socio-economic programmes can reinforce the impact of population programmes if they are properly taken into account in the processes of policy formulation and implementation. The important factors for controlling both fertility and mortality trends include improved and universal education, changes in perceptions and attitudes towards family formation, and greater access to health and family planning information and services.

The analysis of demographic trends presented above has shown that significant progress has been made in controlling both fertility and mortality. This success is not credited to any single population programme but to the fact that levels of income, nutrition, education, employment and housing have improved, and also to more adequate access to and use of health services and family planning clinics.

Mexico's recent policy to curb rapid population growth appears to offer many positive indications, although the experience may not be directly transferable to other countries. The Mexican approach to promoting family planning and population awareness has been highly centralized, initiated from the highest levels of administration. The effectiveness of this strategy derived from the power of the executive to make its policy felt throughout the many tiers of the state bureaucracy. Two particular characteristics of the health sector have contributed to programme success. One was that several of the institutions called on to deliver services were, by virtue of their financial resources and organizational coherence, well equipped to take on the additional responsibilities of delivering family planning information and services. A second characteristic contributing to programme success was the responsiveness of the doctors employed by the public institutions, which was clearly enhanced by the comparatively limited opportunities for professional advancement to be found in practice (Alba and Potter, 1986, p. 69). The Mexican experience thus serves as an example of the speed and efficacy with which public opinion and governmental infrastructure can be mobilized and extended, given the political will to do so.

The implementation of population policy is currently being complemented by the present administration as attempts to decentralize the nation's vast system of public administration. The decentralized approach to population policy will involve motivating and monitoring the programmes that will become the responsibility of authorities in the respective states.

There is awareness among Governments and in scholarly circles that at least on three accounts population policy faces great challenges. Population programmes need to move into the direction of specifically targeted groups, and have begun to do so. To progress further additional and more sophisticated research may be useful in identifying barriers to fertility decline in specific social groups or particular regions. Second, to achieve changes in spatial distribution successful measures have yet to be found. Finally, population policy has to address more directly the issue of labour force absorption, and the still rapidly increasing numbers of new entrants into the working ages presents an enormous challenge. But the groundwork is being built, experience is being acquired, and the political will is present.

Notes

1/ Localities with less than 2,500 inhabitants are classified as rural.

2/ A recent example is Nora Lustig, "Economic crisis and living standards in Mexico: 1982-1985" (Draft, El Colegio de México, May 1986).

3/ For a review of traditional and emerging Mexican views up to the mid-1960s on population growth and development, see Miguel S. Wionczek and Jorge E. Navarrete, "El pensamiento mexicano sobre crecimiento demográfico y desarrollo", Comercio Exterior 15, June 1965, supplement, pp. 23-28. The review concludes that only with great reticence was it admitted that rapid population growth rate could be an obstacle to economic development.

4/ An influential research piece on the country's demographics and population-related issues was the collective work by the Center of Economic and Demographic Studies, Dinámica de la Población de México. (Mexico, El Colegio de México, 1970). Previously, another work had shown, after preparing a set of population projections, the full demographic impact of current fertility and mortality trends. See Raúl Benítez Z. and Gustavo Cabrera A., Proyecciones de la Población de México, 1960-1980 (México, D.F., Banco de México, 1966).

5/ Victor L. Urquidi provided one of the most articulate arguments. See, for example his "El crecimiento demográfico y el desarrollo económico latinoamericano", Demografía y Economía, vol. 1, No. 1 (1967), pp. 1-8; and "Perfil general: economía y población", in El Perfil de México en 1980, vol. 1 (México, D.F., Siglo XXI, 1970), pp. 1-313.

6/ Rates calculated from age specific fertility figures in Centro de Estudios Demográficos y de Desarrollo Urbano, Dinámico de la Población de México (Mexico, El Colegio de México, 1970), chap. III, pp. 45-48.

7/ For a detailed account of urban development and the regionalization used, see Luis Unikel, El desarrollo urbano en México: diagnóstico e implicaciones futuras (México, El Colegio de México, 1976).

8/ For a discussion on the urban and non-urban categories, see Unikel, op. cit.

9/ The impact on urban population growth of migration is greater than assumed above. For example, in the 1960-1970 period, the direct contribution of net in-migration to metropolitan Mexico City growth was 36.3 per cent. Nevertheless, the indirect contribution of births of

persons who had migrated to the capital during that period, was significant, 33.1 per cent of total population growth. This meant that the contribution of in-migration - direct and indirect - to population growth in metropolitan Mexico City accounted for 69.4 per cent of total population growth. See Ana María Goldani, "Impacto de la inmigración sobre la población del área metropolitana de la ciudad de México", Master's thesis, El Colegio de México, 1976.

10/ Estimated population of this area in 1986 is 18 million. Report of the Consejo Nacional de Población on the XVII Ordinary Session.

11/ Consejo Nacional de Población, "La población de México en el año 2000" Mexico (n.d.), p. 18.

12/ Consejo Nacional de Población, "Política demográfica nacional y regional: objetivos y metas 1978-1982" (Mexico City, 1977).

13/ The estimate refers to 1984. See Manuel García y Griego and Francisco Giner de los Rios, "Es vulnerable la economía mexicana a la aplicación de políticas migratorias estadounidenses?", in México-Estados Unidos, 1984, Manuel García y Griego and Gustavo Vega, eds. (Mexico, El Colegio de México, 1985), pp. 221-272. These estimates should not be confused with the figures of the deportable aliens located by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service.

14/ The average length of stay out of Mexico has been estimated at six months. See Centro Nacional de Información y Estadísticas del Trabajo, Los Trabajadores Mexicanos en Estados Unidos (México, Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social, June 1982).

15/ The Law was formulated in 1973 and became law on 7 January 1974.

16/ There is only one plan: the National Development Plan. The rest are programmes: sectoral, institutional (parastatal entities), regional and special. Planning Law, arts. 21 and 22.

17/ General Population Law (1974), art. 5.

18/ Programa Nacional de Población, 1984-1988, p. 31. The strategy conforms to the general guidelines of the National System of Democratic Planning; see Planning Law (1983).

19/ The Planning Law (1983), art. 21, contemplates the inclusion of longer-term considerations and projections than the six-year constitutional period of each administration.



20/ There was an antecedent to this co-ordinating office. In 1974 an Inter-institutional Commission on Maternal and Child Health Care and Family Planning was established as a technical group to set standards for private and public institutions operating in these fields. This commission included representatives of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the Mexican Social Security Institute, the Institute of Social Security and Services for Government Workers, the Foundation for Population Studies and the Association for Maternal Health.

21/ Ibid. This policy had three components: retention, reorientation and reallocation (the strategy was named "policy of three Rs"). Nevertheless, the regional demographic goals were not easily attached to specific actions to be implemented by the concerned ministries. However, technical bodies or study teams, involving representatives of CONAPO and of different ministries and other public entities, were formed with the objective of furthering the incorporation of the demographic goals into the programmes of the different agencies, (Consejo Nacional de Población, 1977).

22/ Moreover, CONAPO has to hold regular sessions to inform its board members of the demographic situation of the country, the activities of the Council and the action to be taken in the future. A periodic, general evaluation of policy and programmes is thus assured.

23/ It is important to mention that the National Family Planning Programme, 1985-1988, was based on the Interinstitutional Family Planning Programmes, 1983-1988, developed by the Health Sector.

24/ To decriminalize abortion would have amounted to cultural coercion.

25/ The SSA and the IMSS are the two most important of the institutions comprising the public health sector. In addition to SSA and IMSS, it includes the various specialized social security institutions serving employees of specific parastatal enterprises (like PEMEX) or the Government itself (ISSSTE), and the government agency in-charge with protecting and providing care for children (DIF).

26/ The CPNPF was dissolved in 1980.

27/ This discussion draws heavily on Alba and Potter (1986), pp. 62-68.

28/ This was effected under an IMSS-COPLAMAR programme. COPLAMAR is the acronym for the General Co-ordination of the National Plan for Depressed Zones and Marginal Groups. In May 1979, an agreement was reached whereby the IMSS would, on behalf of COPLAMAR, provide primary health care to a wide range of rural communities. See Planificación

familiar, población y salud en el México rural, Jorge Martínez Manautou, ed. (Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), 1986). Total expenditure on this programme during the 1979 to 1982 period amounted to 14 billion pesos, nearly \$US 500 million at the then prevailing rate of exchange. See Emilio Lozoya Thalmann, "Social security, health and social solidarity in Mexico", in the The Political Economy of Income Distribution in Mexico, Pedro Aspe and Paul E. Sigmund, eds. (New York, Holmes and Meier, 1984). SSA was also constructing rural hospitals and clinics.

29/ For a general view on contraceptive practice among social groups see Mario Bronfman, Elsa Lopez y Rodolfo Tuirán, "Práctica anticonceptiva y clases sociales en México: la experiencia reciente", Estudios Demográficos y Urbanos, vol. 1, No. 2 (May-August 1986), pp. 165-203.

30/ In 1986, CONAPO was granted the annual United Nations Population Award.

31/ The Mexican Government created an agency, the Mexican Commission for Aid to the Refugees (COMAR), to respond to this situation. Refugees in Mexican camps numbered nearly 40,000 in 1985.

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GLOSSARY

Contraceptive prevalence rate: percentage currently using contraception; usually based on married or sexually active couples with women in the reproductive age.

Crude birth rate: the number of births in a year per 1,000 mid-year population.

Crude death rate: the number of deaths in a year per 1,000 mid-year population.

Dependency ratio or age dependency ratio: the ratio of the combined child population under 15 years of age and adult population 65 years and over to the population of intermediate age per 100.

Foreign-born population: persons born outside the country or area in which they were enumerated at the time of the census.

General fertility rate: the annual number of births divided by the mid-year population of women aged 15 to 49 years multiplied by 1,000.

Gross reproduction rate: a measure of the reproduction of a population expressed as an average number of daughters to be born to a cohort of women during their reproductive age, assuming no mortality and a fixed schedule of age-specific fertility rates. More specifically, it is the sum of age-specific fertility rates for the period multiplied by the proportion of the total births of girl babies.

Infant mortality rate: the probability of dying between birth and age 1 multiplied by 1,000; commonly calculated as the number of deaths of infants under one year of age in any given calendar year divided by the number of births in that year and multiplied by 1,000.

Life expectancy at birth: a life-table function to indicate the expected average number of years to be lived by a newly born baby, assuming a fixed schedule of age-specific mortality rates.

Mean age at first marriage (females): the average age at which women marry for the first time.

Median age: the age which divides the population into two groups of equal size, one of which is younger and the other is older.

Natural rate of increase: the difference between the crude birth rate and the crude death rate, expressed per 1,000 mid-year population.

Net migration: the difference between gross immigration and gross emigration.

Net migration rate: the difference between gross immigration and gross emigration per 1,000 of the mid-year population.

Net reproduction rate: a refined measure of the reproduction of population expressed as an average number of daughters that a cohort of newly born girl babies will bear during their lifetime, assuming fixed schedules of age-specific fertility and mortality rates. In other words, it is the measure of the extent to which a cohort of newly born girls will replace themselves under given schedules of age-specific fertility and mortality rates.

Rate of growth: the exponential average annual rate of population growth, expressed as a percentage.

Sex ratio: the number of men per 100 women.

Survival ratio: the probability of surviving from one age to an older one; it is often computed for five-year age groups and a five-year time period.

Total fertility rate: the sum of the age specific fertility rates over all ages of the child-bearing period; if five-year age groups are used, the sum of the rates is multiplied by 5. This measure gives the approximate magnitude of "completed family size", that is, the total number of children an average woman will bear in her lifetime, assuming no mortality.

Urban population: population living in areas defined as urban by national authorities.