

AN EVALUATION OF THE SAMPLE REGISTRATION SCHEME IN INDIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

For meaningful planning for social and economic development and for policy making, basic demographic information of a current and continuous nature is a must. Though census data are basic and are of great importance, but due to their static nature and inherent restricted subject coverage, they are only of limited value. Dynamic dependable data through continuous registration system coupled with census and other *ad hoc* data are the ones really needed. Unfortunately, in most of the developing countries, where the resources are limited and the need for proper planning most, such dynamic data are either not available or are not dependable due to several reasons. One-time surveys can fill in some of the gaps in knowledge, but they have their own limitations and problems and are static as well.

Thus recourse has to be had to surveys which combine the advantages of sample periodical enquiries and continuous registration as was put in effect in Pakistan (Pakistan Growth Estimation, PGE), in Thailand (Survey of Population Change, SPC) or in Turkey (Demographic Surveys, TDS). The Indian Sample Registration Scheme (SRS) is in line with this idea.

At present, the SRS is in progress in all States and almost all the Union Territories. The complete coverage took five years. First it was experimental on a pilot basis and on the basis of experience gained, the field work, supervision, schedules etc. were finalised. Besides, the scheme is kept under constant review by annual meetings of State officers who exchange their views, experience and problems which are then utilised to streamline the operations. Again, as the quality of work essentially depends on the field enumerators, the

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