

METHODOLOGY

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SURVEY

The planning and implementation of the survey was the responsibility of the National Director, the Director of Census and Statistics, in collaboration with the representatives of the Westinghouse Health System. To assist in the planning and implementation steps of the survey a National Steering Committee and a Technical Advisory Panel were set up. Both these bodies consisted of members of Governmental and non-Governmental organizations directly concerned with the population and family planning program related issues of the country. The National Steering Committee made valuable contributions in the planning stages in determining the scope of the survey and in drawing up the survey design. The Technical Advisory Panel assisted in the technical details of survey design.

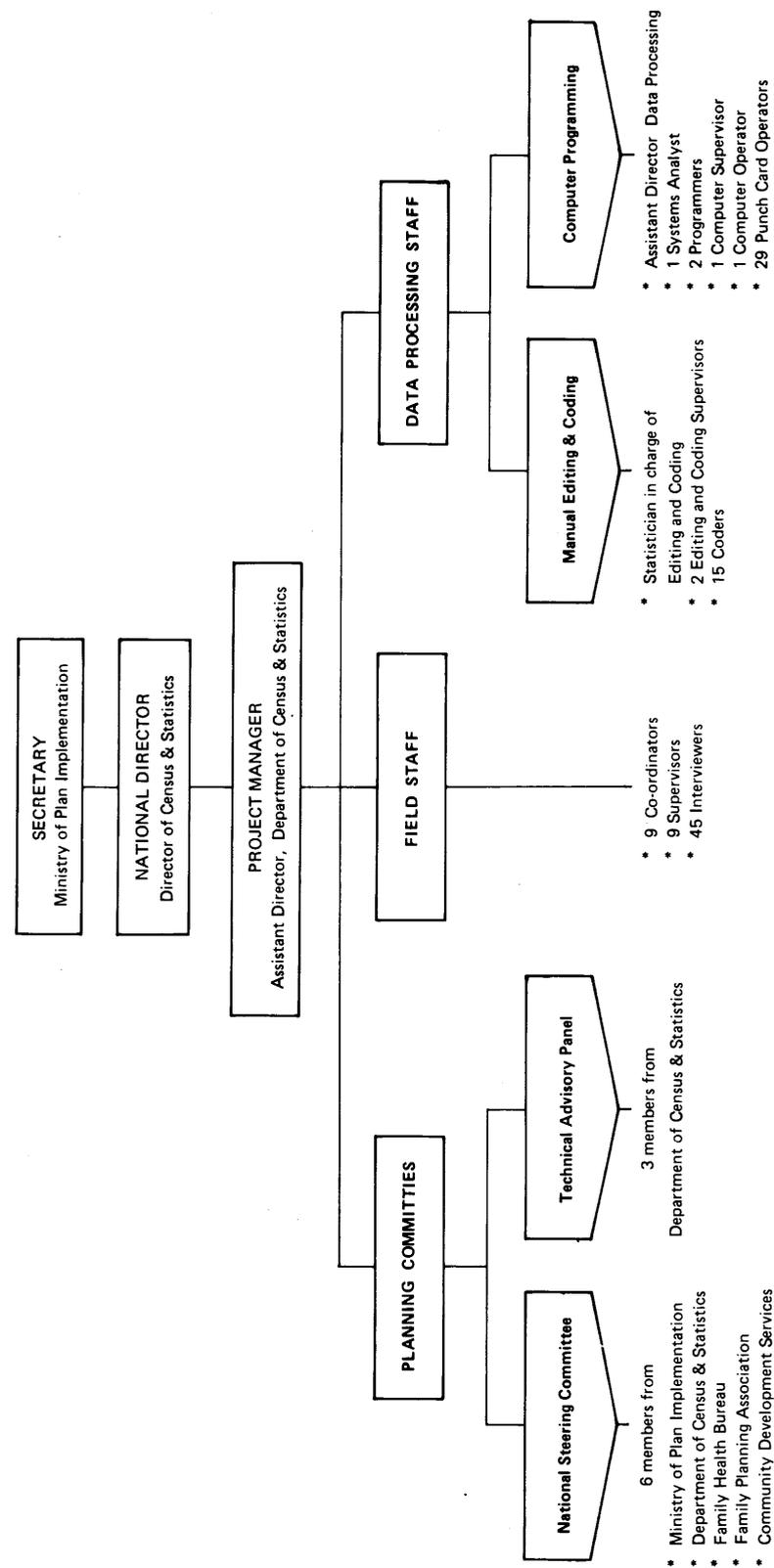
- Contracting
- Survey design and sampling
- Updating the sampling frame
- Questionnaire design and translation
- Preparation of Manuals
- Pre-tests
- Selection of field staff
- Printing - Questionnaire & Manuals
- Supervisor and interviewer training
- Field work
- Office editing and coding
- Punching
- Tabulations
- Seminar
- Report

Their contribution was particularly valuable in the designing of the questionnaire. The entire survey organization was under the auspices of the Secretary to the Ministry of Plan Implementation.

The implementing agency of the survey was the Department of Census and Statistics under the direction of the National Director. An Assistant Director of the Department functioned as Project Manager and was responsible for monitoring the survey activities. All other technical, administrative and support staff were also drawn from the Department. Figure 2.1 illustrates the personnel organization of the survey. The survey activities were planned to be completed within a period of 14 months from September 1981. The time schedule as planned at the initial stages was as follows.

- September, 1981.
- September, October, November, December.
- December.
- October, November, December.
- October, November, December.
- November, December.
- December.
- January, 1982.
- January.
- February, March.
- March, April
- April, May.
- June, July, August.
- August.
- August to November

Figure 2.1. ORGANISATION OF SURVEY PERSONNEL



This time schedule was adhered to in all activities upto the Seminar on survey findings. The preparation of the Final Report took a longer time than expected. However, a draft report was prepared in time for the Seminar and was circulated among interested institutions and persons.

### SAMPLE DESIGN

The sample was a nationally representative probability sample drawn from a two stage

design. In the first stage, a sample of Census Blocks was drawn from the predetermined strata. In the second stage a sample of housing units was drawn from each selected Census Block. All ever-married women aged 15-49 who lived in the selected housing units or who spent the previous night in the unit were interviewed in detail.

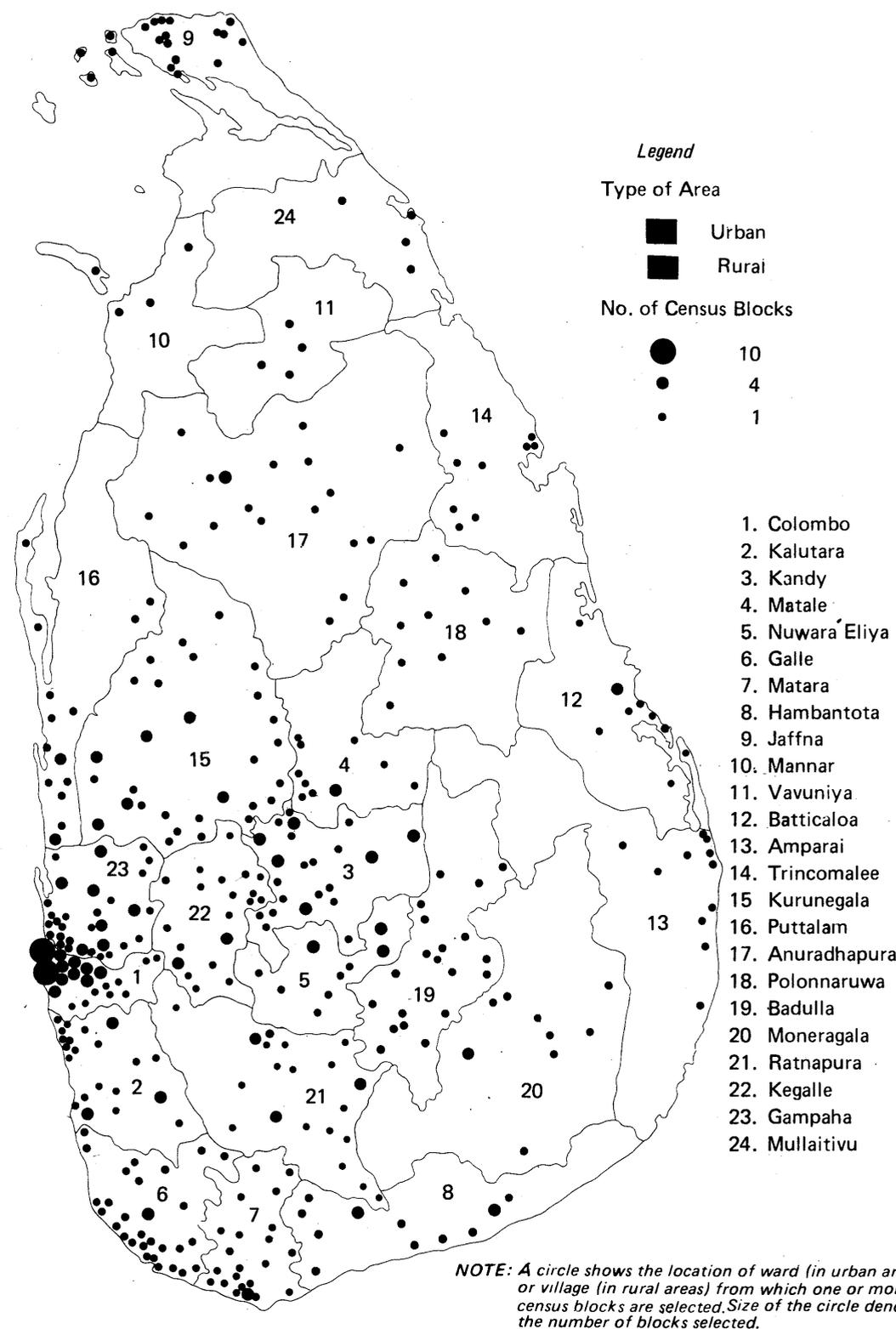
### First Stage Selection

The country was stratified into 2 strata as urban and rural areas.

Table 2.1 DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE CENSUS BLOCKS BY STRATA AND DISTRICTS

Province/District	No. of Census Blocks		
	Urban Stratum	Rural Stratum	Total
1. Western Province	50	81	131
Colombo	35	17	52
Gampaha	10	39	49
Kalutara	5	25	30
2. Central Province	6	69	75
Kandy	4	38	42
Matale	1	12	13
Nuwara Eliya	1	19	20
3. Southern Province	8	62	70
Galle	5	25	30
Matara	2	22	24
Hambantota	1	15	16
4. Northern Province	9	30	39
Jaffna	6	20	26
Mannar	1	4	5
Vavuniya	1	3	4
Mullaitivu	1	3	4
5. Eastern Province	6	30	36
Batticaloa	2	10	12
Trincomalee	2	7	9
Amparai	2	13	15
6. North Western Province	3	62	65
Kurunegala	1	45	46
Puttalam	2	17	19
7. North Central Province	2	30	32
Anuradhapura	1	21	22
Polonnaruwa	1	9	10
8. Uva Province	2	34	36
Badulla	1	23	24
Moneragala	1	11	12
9. Sabaragamuwa Province	4	52	56
Ratnapura	2	28	30
Kegalle	2	24	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>540</b>

Figure - 2.2. DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE CENSUS BLOCKS BY DISTRICTS



It was decided to select a sample of about 4,500 respondents spread out in 540 Census Blocks. A Census Block is an area assigned to an enumerator at the 1981 Census of Population and Housing for the purpose of enumeration. The Survey estimates were required at the national level and hence it was decided to allocate the sample proportional to the stratum population which was defined as the female population aged 15-49. This made it necessary to select 90 Census Blocks from the Urban Stratum and 450 from the rural stratum. The required number of blocks within each stratum was then selected from among the 24 administrative districts, the number selected from each district being proportional to the stratum population within the district. Table 2.1 shows the distribution of the selected Census Blocks.

## Second Stage Selection

The Second Stage consisted of selecting households from lists of housing units. These lists were obtained from the Pre-listing Forms prepared for the 1981 Census and were updated by the procedure outlined in the next section.

The procedure for selection of households was as follows. In the urban Census Blocks, a systematic sample of 15 housing units was selected from a list of such units. That is, starting from a randomly selected unit every unit at the end of an interval equal to one fifteenth the number of units in the block was selected in to the sample. In the rural Census Blocks, clusters of approximately ten housing units were formed and one cluster was selected at random from each block. All households in every housing unit whenever there was more than one in a unit were selected into the sample.

The number of selected housing units and households and eligible respondents selected from each district are shown in columns 2, 5 and 6 of Table 2.2.

## Listing of Housing Units

The target population of the Survey was all ever-married women 15-49 years old living in housing units. A housing unit was defined as a

place of residence separate from other places of residence and with an independent access. One or more households could occupy one housing unit.

The population living in places other than housing units such as institutions were excluded. The effect of this exclusion on the survey estimates was considered to be small as the population living in non-housing units at the 1981 Census was a very small proportion of approximately 2 per cent.

The sample frame for the survey was the Pre-listing Forms of the 1981 Census. A Pre-listing Form was prepared for each Census Block and it contained a list of all housing units and non-housing units in the Census Block. The Pre-listing Forms of the selected Census Blocks were updated by the range Statistical Investigators of the Department. These officers were also the ones who prepared and later updated the lists initially for the Census and were quite familiar with the updating procedures. However, they were given specific instructions on updating by asking to delete the demolished and vacant units and to insert in the proper place any new units that had come up since the Census.

While the Survey was going on, it was found that some selected housing units were vacant, some were non-existent, and some could not be located by their addresses. However, the proportion of such units was quite small, only 2.7% and is unlikely to have caused a bias in the selection procedure.

## RESPONSE RATES

Table 2.2 columns 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 present data on the success of interviews in terms the number and percentages of completed interviews at housing unit, household and individual level. Overall 94.9 per cent of the selected housing units was interviewed. All households in every interviewed housing unit without exception were interviewed. Of the 4,666 eligible respondents in these households, 96 per cent were successfully interviewed on the individual schedules. The lowest response rate recorded for any district is 92 per cent.

Table 2.2. DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSING UNITS, HOUSEHOLDS, AND RESPONDENTS BY DISTRICT

District	Housing Units			Households	Eligible Respondents		
	No. Selected	No. Interviewed	% Interviewed	No. Selected & Interviewed	No. Selected	No. Interviewed	% Interviewed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Colombo	701	641	92	675	576	559	97
Gampaha	542	510	94	514	394	380	96
Kalutara	314	302	96	314	252	237	94
Kandy	426	399	94	416	347	320	92
Matale	133	127	96	129	104	101	97
Nuwara Eliya	221	207	94	219	182	176	97
Galle	325	313	96	321	233	220	94
Matara	255	246	97	257	185	183	99
Hambantota	174	166	95	168	127	126	99
Jaffna	288	279	97	295	235	228	97
Mannar	53	53	100	57	46	45	98
Vavuniya	46	46	100	49	42	42	100
Mullaitivu	45	44	98	46	39	39	92
Batticaloa	128	121	95	125	114	111	97
Amparai	160	153	96	160	138	132	96
Trincomalee	104	98	94	103	98	97	99
Kurunegala	462	443	96	454	360	346	96
Puttalam	202	188	93	189	175	172	98
Anuradhapura	224	208	93	222	176	171	97
Polonnaruwa	103	99	96	101	84	84	100
Badulla	243	235	97	202	191	191	95
Moneragala	128	114	89	116	101	96	95
Ratnapura	315	304	97	314	249	245	98
Kegalle	267	262	98	264	207	203	98
Sri Lanka	5,859	5,558	95	5,753	4,666	4,500	96

The details of Household and Individual Interviews are given below. It can be seen that the main reason for not completing the interviews in the small number of cases where they

could not be completed was the absence of a competent respondent at home and the vacant or demolished state of the unit. It is remarkable that only 2 households refused to be interviewed.

RESULTS OF HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

	Number	Per cent
Completed	5,753	91.2
No competent respondent at home	280	4.4
Deferred	2	0.0
Refused	2	0.0
Dwelling vacant or demolished	165	2.6
Address not a dwelling	8	0.1
Address not found or inaccessible	17	0.3
Other	88	1.4
Total	6,315	100.0

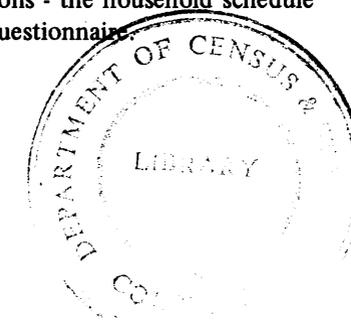
RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

	Number	Per cent
Completed	4,500	96.4
Not at Home	69	1.5
Deferred	0	0
Refused	6	0.1
Other	91	2.1
Total	4,666	100.0

In the case of individual interviews the non-response was mainly due to the respondent being away from home and "other" miscellaneous reasons and the refusals were a negligibly small proportion. Thus in this survey the overall response rates at both the household and individual interviews were quite high and there are no noteworthy differences in the response rates between districts.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey questionnaire was an adaptation of the core questionnaire developed by the Westinghouse Health System to collect information relating to family planning management. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix 2. It had two main sections - the household schedule and the individual questionnaire.



## Household Schedule

The household schedule was used for listing all females present regardless of their eligibility and for recording their background information. Names of females who usually resided in the household and of female visitors who spent the previous night in the household were recorded in this schedule. For each of these women, age, date of birth, and marital status were entered and based on these information the interviewers decided and recorded the eligibility of each woman for the individual interview.

A woman was eligible for the individual interview if she met all of the following three criteria:

1. 15 through 49 years old.
2. Had been or was currently married.
3. Was in the household on the night prior to the interview.

## Individual Questionnaire

The individual questionnaire consisted of the following five sections:-

- Section I - Respondent's Background.
- Section II - Fertility
- Section III - Fertility Regulation
- Section IV - Contraceptive Availability
- Section V - Husband's Status

In adapting the core questionnaire to meet the country's requirements, some additional questions were included. Timing of future births and breast feeding were added to Section II, motivation to adopt family planning, approval of family planning, and induced abortions were added to Section III, and problems related to family planning services was added to Section IV.

The questionnaire was translated into the two national languages, Sinhala and Tamil. The translations were independently re-translated into English and compared with the original to ensure exactness of the translation.

The questionnaires and all other survey documents were printed by the Printing Division of the Department.

## PRE-TEST

Two pre-tests were carried out to test the questionnaire, one in November 1981 and the other in December 1981, in five areas not included in the Sample. The training for the pre-tests was carried out in close collaboration with the two Westinghouse advisers. The nine Statistical Officers who were enumerators at these pre-tests later functioned as Supervisors during field operations.

These pre-tests were used to provide information about the length of the actual interviews, clarity of question wording, interpretation of questions by respondents, ease of data entry by interviewers and identification of categories to close the open-ended questions. After each pre-test, the questionnaire and other survey instruments were modified to reflect the pre-test experiences. The final questionnaire was then reviewed by a technical panel of experts and also by the National Steering Committee.

## TRAINING

The training programme lasted a period of one week and included both class room work and field exercises. Class room work consisted of a lecture on reproductive physiology, familiarisation with the questionnaire and other survey documents, and a film on contraceptive use and role-playing interviews. The field exercises consisted of a series of practice interviews in the city suburbs under supervision and observation by the training staff. The training provided was very intensive, and detailed and covered techniques of interviewing and question by question instructions on the questionnaire.

The interviewers were selected from the Department's Statistical Investigators, most of whom were University Graduates. As in earlier fertility surveys, female interviewers were selected because it was thought that they could easily establish the rapport that would enable respondents to discuss sexually related and sensitive topics.

## FIELD WORK

Field work was carried out during the period February to March 1982. The Survey was given a fair degree of publicity through the media of the newspapers and the radio.

For the purpose of organising the field work one co-ordinator was appointed to be in overall charge of all field work in each of the 9 provinces of the country. A province consists of a number of districts ranging from 2 to 4. Interviews in each province was carried out by a team of 5 interviewers headed by a supervisor. Thus, in all, there were 9 co-ordinators, 9 supervisors, and 45 interviewers in 9 teams.

The co-ordinators were directly responsible for all technical, administrative, and financial aspects of field operations in their respective provinces. The major responsibilities of co-ordinators included the following:

1. Setting up temporary field offices;
2. Arranging for food, lodging and transportation for the field staff;
3. Correct identification of Sample Census Blocks and Sample Housing Units;
4. Ensuring the observance of correct procedures;
5. Delivery of all completed survey documents to Head Office.

The co-ordinators maintained regular contact with the Head Office and the District Statistical Office for instructions and feed backs.

The supervisor of each team was responsible for overseeing the interviews and field coding, carrying out spot checks, and ensuring the correctness of procedures followed by interviewers and checking all completed survey documents.

Several measures were adopted to ensure the quality of data collected. During the first week of field work, all teams worked in and around Colombo City so that headquarters staff could observe and provide additional help and ensure observance of correct procedures. Later,

throughout the field work supervisors remained with their teams. The supervisors checked all completed schedules for internal consistency and to make sure that all instructions were adhered to. In addition, the co-ordinators spot checked 10 to 15 per cent of the interviews in each Census Block.

Instructions were given to the team and the supervisors to make all stipulated checks on the completed questionnaires within a census block before moving to another block and to make any call backs where necessary to keep the non-responses to a minimum.

## EDITING, CODING, TABULATION AND ANALYSIS

Seventeen of the interviewers and two supervisors were retained for manual editing and coding. These officers were given detailed instructions in editing and coding procedures by two senior officers who were also responsible for the preparation of edit specifications and the coding instructions. A coder was, on average, expected to edit, code and check 20 schedules per day. All responses to questions were given specific numeric, machine readable values. Since all but two questions used procoded responses, the work of the coders was fairly simple and it progressed smoothly.

Computer processing of the data was carried out by the Data Processing Division of the Department of Census and Statistics. Data were key punched directly from the schedules. Error printouts were returned to the editors and coders for correction. At the end of each correction, the files were updated and the edit program was re-run until a clean data file was obtained.

The specified tabulations were prepared well within the allotted time of 2½ months from June to early August. Each tabulation was checked for likely errors and internal consistency and it was possible to make the necessary corrections without much delay. These tabulations were made available to any interested institution in order to enable the data from the

**Table 2.3. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE POPULATION BY AGE AT CPS, 1982 AND CENSUS, 1981**

Age Group	Percentage	
	Census 1981	CPS 1982
00 - 04	12.4	12.6
05 - 09	11.4	11.5
10 - 14	11.4	11.3
15 - 19	10.9	10.5
20 - 24	10.4	10.3
25 - 29	8.7	9.0
30 - 34	7.6	7.4
35 - 39	5.7	5.9
40 - 44	4.6	4.3
45 - 49	4.1	4.0
50 - 54	3.5	3.7
55 - 59	2.8	3.2
60 - 64	2.2	2.0
65 & Over	4.2	4.4

Source: 1981 Data are from Department of Census and Statistics (1982) *Census of Population and Housing-Preliminary Release No. 2.*

survey to be used as early as possible.

A preliminary analysis of the data was carried out by a team of 6 staff members of the Department of Census and Statistics. In this task they were assisted by the Westinghouse representative whose advice and comments were particularly valuable in the presentation of results. These findings were presented at a seminar held in August 1982 which was attended by about 30 professionals and administrators working in the field of population.

#### PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF THE DATA

This section presents an evaluation of the age data by comparing the data from the survey with those from other sources. It is hoped that more detailed evaluations would be carried out in later more indepth analysis of the survey data.

Table 2.3 presents the age distribution of females in household population of the survey with the 1981 Census age distribution of females. It is seen that the two distributions are remarkably similar; the largest difference between the percentages for any age group being only 0.4. It is noteworthy that in the survey a slightly higher percentage of children 0-4 years is reported than in the census where this group is likely to be under-enumerated. Thus, it appears that the quality of enumeration is similar at the CPS and the 1981 Census. Analysis of the 1981 Census age data (Retherford Etal, 1982) has shown that these data are of remarkably high quality in that the degree of age heaping and misreporting is at a very low level. This comparison,, it must be remembered, applies to the household population and no generalization can be made about the characteristics collected of individuals collected at the individual interviews.

## BACKGROUND VARIABLES

### INTRODUCTION

The findings of the CPS on fertility, contraceptive knowledge, use, and availability presented in the following Chapters take the form of description of levels of subgroups of the sample. These subgroups are defined by a number of background variables, namely:

- Region of Residence
- Type of Place of Residence
- Ethnic Group
- Religion
- Level of Education
- Work Status

In Sri Lanka, information on these background variables are conventionally collected at demographic surveys and they are generally considered to represent the socio-economic and cultural identification of a person. Before a discussion of differentials it is important to describe the categories of these variables and to indicate their relative sizes in the sample.

### DESCRIPTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF BACKGROUND VARIABLES

A brief description of each of the background variables follows. The percentage distribution of the variables in the sample is shown in Table 3.1.

#### Region of Residence

Region of residence identifies 6 socio-economic zones which are contiguous geographic areas shown in Map 3.1. Zone 1 is the city of Colombo, Zone 2 consists of the rest of Colombo district and the two neighbouring southern districts of Galle and Matara. Zone 3

is the total eastern coastal belt consisting of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and part of Amparai district. Zone 5 covers the hill country districts of Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Kegalle, Ratnapura and part of Kurunegala. Zone 6 is the northern peninsula district of Jaffna and the two adjoining districts. The remaining area circling Zone 6 on the north, east and southeast and consisting of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Hambantota, Puttalam and a part of Kurunegala district is Zone 4.

The zonal distribution of the sample given in Table 3.1 shows that Zone 6 has the largest share of 34.6 per cent of the sample, Zone 2 is next with 26.4 per cent followed by Zone 3 with 15.5 per cent. The remaining Zones 1, 4 and 5 each contain 7 to 8 per cent of the total sample.

#### Type of Place of Residence

Type of place of residence identifies 3 categories: urban, rural, and estate. Urban areas are the areas so defined for administrative purposes and are administered by local bodies. Approximately 22 per cent of the country's population live in these urban areas. Estates are the plantations of tea, rubber, and coconut. The remaining areas fall in to the rural category.

23.9 per cent of the sample respondents were in urban areas, 69.3 in rural areas and 6.8 in estate areas.

#### Ethnic Group

Sri Lanka's population constitutes of 5 ethnic groups: Sinhalese, Sri Lanka Tamils, Indian Tamils, Moors, Malays and other minorities. Sinhalese are the majority ethnic group. Sri Lanka Tamils are the descendants of the early

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50 - 54	3.5	3.7
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**Table 3.1. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE BY BACKGROUND VARIABLES**

**Region of Residence**

	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5	Zone 6
Number	388	1,190	697	318	351	1,556
%	8.6	26.4	15.5	7.1	7.8	34.6

**Type of Residence**

	Urban	Rural	Estate
Number	1,076	3,117	307
%	23.9	69.3	6.8

**Religion**

	Buddhist	Hindu	Muslim	Roman Catholic	Other Christian & Others
Number	3,143	703	316	310	28
%	69.8	15.6	7.0	6.9	0.6

**Ethnic Group**

	Sinhala	Sri Lanka Tamil	Indian Tamil	Moor	Other
Number	3,337	526	321	299	17
%	74.2	11.7	7.1	6.6	0.4

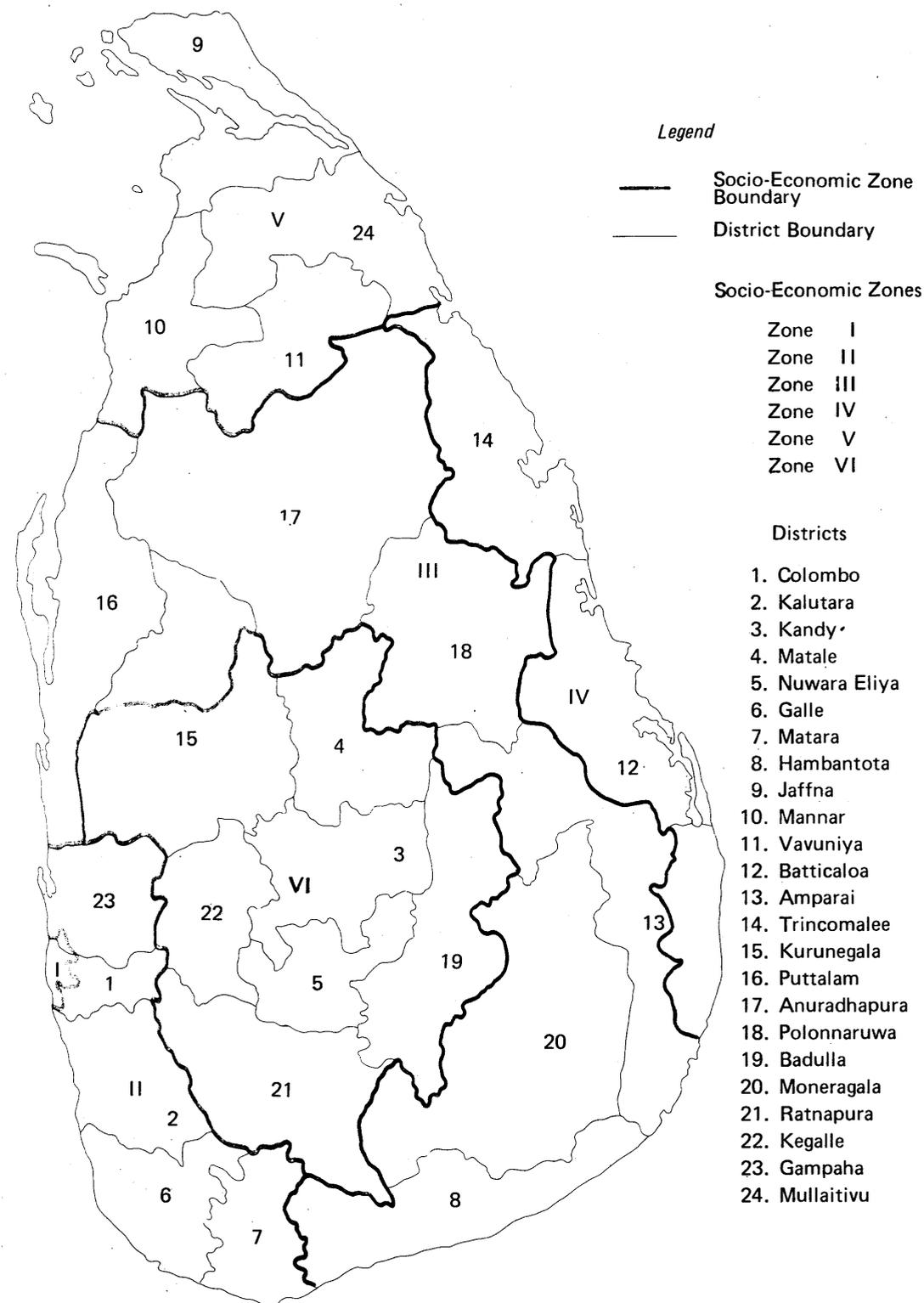
**Level of Education**

	No Schooling	Primary	Secondary/ Higher
Number	676	1,567	2,557
%	15.0	34.8	50.1

**Work Status**

	Not Working	Working at Home	Working away from Home
Number	2,990	474	1,036
%	66.4	10.5	23.0

**Figure - 3.1. DISTRICTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ZONES OF SRI LANKA**



Indian immigrants to the country. Indian Tamils are descendants of more recent Indian immigrants who were brought to the country in the latter part of the 19th century by the British to work in the coffee and tea plantation. Moors are considered to be descendants of ancient Arab travellers who visited the island for trading. In addition, there are a very small proportion of other ethnic groups such as Europeans, Burghers etc.

The sample consists of 74.2 per cent Sinhalese, 11.7 per cent Sri Lanka Tamils, 7.1 per cent Indian Tamils and 6.6 per cent Moors.

## Religion

Five religions are practiced in the country. Buddhism is the religion of the majority, Hinduism comes next in numerical importance followed by Muslim Religion and Roman Catholicism. Christianity of other denominations and a few other religions are also followed by a small proportion of the population.

In the sample, 69.8 per cent are Buddhists, 15.6 per cent Hindus, 7 per cent Muslims and 6.9 per cent Roman Catholics. There is a well known close correspondence between ethnic group and religion as described in the next section.

## Level of Education

Level of education is defined in terms of the grade completed in school. Four classes are defined: No schooling - i.e. never been to school, Primary - i.e. passed grades 1 to 5, Secondary - i.e. passed grades 6 to 9, and higher - i.e. passed grade 10 or above in school or obtained higher qualification.

15 per cent of the sample have never been to school, 34.8 per cent have primary education, and 50.1 per cent have achieved secondary or higher level of education.

In the presentation of data in the following chapters the secondary and higher classes have sometimes been combined because of the very small number of persons in the latter category.

## Work Status

This variable describes a respondents experience in participation in economic activity in terms of three classes: not working, working at home, and working away from home. By work it was meant any form of activity outside own house work which was paid for in cash or kind. Working away from home does not necessarily imply working in white collar occupations. A large majority of women working away from home may be manual workers specially on tea and rubber plantations

66.4 per cent of the women in the sample are not doing any work, 10.5 per cent are engaged in some form of work at home and 23 per cent work away from home.

It must be noted that the distributions discussed above are those of all women 15-49 years in the sample. It is possible that the distribution of a variable may change among age groups. If the distribution of a particular variable has changed over the years then the distribution of that variable in the older age groups will be different from that in the younger age groups. Education and work status are two variables that are likely to have changed over time. Thus there is likely to be a higher percentage of better educated women and working women in the younger than older age groups. The second reason for variations of a variable's distribution by age is that the sample consists only of ever married women and hence variations in age at marriage will cause variations in the background variables associated with age at marriage. Thus, if Moor women marry earlier than other ethnic groups the younger age group is likely to have a higher proportion of Moors than others. Thus, it must be remembered that the observed variations of fertility and contraceptive knowledge and use by age may be associated with the changes in the distributions of background variables by age.

## ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BACKGROUND VARIABLES

In interpreting the observed differentials by background variables an important factor to be

born in mind is the association between these variables. For example, if residents of Zone 1 are seen to have a lower level of fertility than those in other zones this lower level cannot be attributed to the fact of residence in Zone 1. The reasons can be other factors which are themselves associated with the variable region of residence. For example, Zone 1 may have a large share of better educated women who are later marrying and are, therefore, of low fertility. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the degree of association between background variables and other explanatory variables in an analysis of differentials.

Table 3.2 illustrates the level of association between each pair of background variables considered above as a percentage distribution of the respondents in each category of one variable across categories of the other variable. For example, row 1 shows that of the Zone 1 respondents 76.8 per cent are Sinhalese, 8.0 per cent Sri Lanka Tamils, 4.4 per cent Indian Tamils, 9.5 per cent Moors and 1.3 per cent other minority groups. Similarly, 81.2 per cent of women in Zone 1 are not working, 3.6 per cent work at home, and 15.2 per cent work away from home. Several important associations can be seen.

1. Region of residence is associated with practically all other variables: Zone 1 is all urban, Zone 6 is mostly in estate areas, Zones 2 and 4 have urban rural distributions similar to that of the country and Zone 3 has a slightly higher than average share of rural population. Except for Zone 4 and Zone 1 which have heterogeneous ethnic compositions, each zone has a predominance of one ethnic group. There is a clear association of zones with education. They fall in to an order as Zone 1, Zones 2 and 5, Zone 6, and Zone 4 when arranged in order of the proportions with secondary or higher education.
2. Ethnic group and religion are two strongly correlated variables. Almost

all Sinhalese are Buddhists, and Moors are Muslims. A large majority of Sri Lanka and Indian Tamils are Hindus. Roman Catholics are an ethnic mixture mostly of Sinhalese (63 per cent) and Sri Lanka Tamils (28 per cent).

3. Religion and Ethnicity are also associated with most other variables. A higher proportion of Moors (Muslims) than other ethnic groups live in urban areas and Indian Tamils live mostly in estates. Sinhalese have the largest proportion (55 per cent) of women with higher education followed by Sri Lanka Tamils, Moors and Indian Tamils in that order. Moors (Muslims) have the lowest proportion of working women. Indian Tamils have a large proportion of women engaged in work outside home.
4. The relation between work status and level of education is noteworthy. Proportion of women working away from home is higher among women in lower levels of education. This relation stems from the fact that women classified as "working away from home" are mostly the manual workers on estates who have little education.

Thus, we see that the background variables are not independent of one another. A subgroup of the sample population identified as a category of a particular background variable is also characterised by certain categories of other variables.

Therefore, differentials in fertility or contraceptive knowledge and use observed across categories of a given variable cannot be attributed entirely to differences between these categories. For example, urban rural differentials in contraceptive use may be caused by urban rural differences in one or more other variables such as ethnic composition or level of education. Thus, it is important to remember that the differentials discussed in the following Chapters do not imply a causal relationship which is a subject for a more detailed multivariate analysis.