

# Administrative Geography

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# What is 'Administrative Geography'?

- The system by which the territory of a nation or other geopolitical entity is divided into geographical units and sub-units for administrative purposes
- Includes relevant concepts and terminology, unit names, standard codes, and maps of unit boundaries

# Why is it Important for Population Census Work?

- To obtain accurate enumeration, requires fielding one enumerator to *every* household and no enumerator to *more than one* household
- To realize the full value of census data, the only data source that provides population information on *every* geographical sub-unit of a country

# General Structure is Hierarchical

- Nation is divided into first level units, *e.g.*, states in US, provinces in China
- First level units are divided into second level units, *e.g.*, counties in US or prefectures in China
- Second level units are divided into third level units, *e.g.*, counties in China

# Don't Oversimplify!

- The general structure is usually fairly simple, but closer examination invariably reveals exceptions, complications and oddities of all kinds
- National parks, forest reserves, military installations, tribal areas often have special classifications that do not follow the general rules

# Documentation of Administrative Geography

- Should include a text describing concepts, terminology, exceptions
- Should include an accurate, up-to-date list of *every* unit
- List should include name, type of unit, relation to other units
- Also standard code, if any, otherwise census-assigned code

# Cities, Towns and Rural Areas

- The administrative geography of most countries includes some concepts and definitions of cities, towns and rural areas
- These concepts and definitions also must be documented as part of census work
- These are used to define ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ areas and for related purposes

# Statistical *versus* Administrative Geographical Units

- Political boundaries of cities often do not reflect social and economic reality
- It may be desirable to construct statistical units representing cities, towns and related areas
- Among other advantages, this allows the imposition of uniform definitional standards

# Census Data on Cities

- One largely unrealized potential of population census data is to provide data on individual cities
- The population census is the the best or (likely) only data source, and it is valuable
- To provide such data requires clear cut identification of city units

Questions?  
Comments?  
Discussion?