

Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD)

L'Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD) is an academic African institution dedicated to training population specialists and to conduct research. IFORD was created upon a recommendation from the Council of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); it began its activities in 1972 and has its headquarters in Yaoundé. IFORD is academically linked to the University of Yaoundé. The mandate given to IFORD is focused on three major goals: to train African teams in the field of population and development; to conduct research relevant to the understanding of African population issues; and to offer technical support to countries in the field of population and development.

The training program at IFORD has two levels; the first one leads to a MA in Demography, and the second one provides a PhD degree in Demography. Since its creation, IFORD has trained more than 500 African demographers through these two programmes. More recently, IFORD has expanded its capacity to provide short training programmes for three to five weeks.

IFORD has a continuous programme of research that concentrates on five major areas: poverty, sexual and reproductive health, gender and demographic issues, migration, and the linkages between population, the environment and development. Research projects are conducted by the regular staff of IFORD with the participation of its graduate students and visiting scholars. In the area of technical support, IFORD assists African countries in conducting their population censuses, establishing local research activities, providing local training, creating and managing databases, and advising in the formulation and evaluation of population policies. Two recent successful examples are the in-depth three-year study on the linkages between poverty and unmet needs in reproductive health among adolescents and youth in Central Africa, and a study on adolescent reproductive health policies and programmes in Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Togo.

IFORD is the leading institution for training, research and technical assistance in the field of population, serving 26 countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean. IFORD has a large list of scientific publications; the well-known *Bulletin de Liaison* was launched in 1979 and is the main instrument of dissemination of information. The Bulletin has been complemented by other excellent periodic publications, including *Les Annales de l'IFORD*, *Les Cahiers de l'IFORD* and *Les Dossier de l'IFORD*. Recently, the National Statistical Office of Cameroon assisted IFORD in installing the National Data Archive (NADA) application to make available survey metadata and micro data on line to the general public. IFORD has a web site in French at <http://www.iford-cm.org> ; the English version is under construction.