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✓ JOINT STUDY WITH UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL
SERVICES ON WASTAGE OF HUMAN LIFE

Infant and child mortality is obviously one of the most important questions in the realm of public health and health statistics, and has been recognized as such for very many years. Valuable reports on this problem dealing with national conditions have been published from time to time by certain Governments and some outstanding authorities in the field of Medical Statistics have already studied the relationship and importance of the various factors involved in infant and child mortality.

However, there appears to be real need at present for a compilation and analysis of data relating to this question as seen from an international standpoint.

For this purpose, the United Nations has undertaken to prepare a treatise on "Wastage of Human Life" including mortality during the first five years of life and avoidable losses occurring in the pre-natal period. In accordance with the arrangements for collaboration between the United Nations and WHO, which were approved by the First Health Assembly,¹ the Acting Director of the United Nations Population Division, who is co-ordinating this project, has consulted WHO about the plan of work.

It is evident that some portions of the proposed treatise fall within the special competence of WHO: these are notably the chapter on causes of death and the sections which deal with definitions of some terms, problems of registration and internal

¹ Off. Rec. WHO 13, pages 81, 228 and 322

