

3. Using the worksheets, list the communities in the rural areas and prepare an inventory of the appropriate local facilities and economic activity.
4. Apply a grading and weighting scheme and select prospective locations for service, and if necessary, assign priorities.

The selection criterion is shaped, and in some cases rigidly defined, by the rural program objectives. Often selection is based on a set of factors that are individually scored and then combined using a multiplier to weight factors according to importance (for example 60 per cent on economic activity and 40 per cent on population size). Arranging the list of locations by state, district, or administrative division may be an advantage.

Project budget or time constraints could make it necessary to assign priorities. Priorities can be assigned to provide a more dispersed service to widely distributed points (for example country-wide), or to provide a more comprehensive service on a regional basis.

Proceeding region by region usually provides a better return on investments; however, a widely distributed approach may be necessary to satisfy a need for broad initial coverage; for example, to meet national security and government administrative or social program needs.

### 4.3 Information Sources

The following are typical data sources that can be used, if available, in putting together a list of prospective locations:

- government publications and studies (maps, charts, data from all levels and departments of government);
- national development plans (covering economic and social aspects as well as specific infrastructure such as roads, water, electrification, and tourism);
- demographic studies;
- economic studies and forecasts;
- topographic maps, road maps, aerial photographs; and
- studies and plans prepared by consultants and external agencies such as regional co-ordinating bodies and the ITU.

Information can be solicited from the rural regions by circulating carefully worded questionnaires to the appropriate local governments. When reliable data are scarce, the expense of sending out a survey team is often justified.

The degree of research that must be done depends on how definitive the project objectives are. If they are general, more information is needed to decide which locations should receive new or expanded service.