

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



42043



Distr.  
LIMITED

E/CN.14/STC/14  
8 August 1962

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
Standing Committee on Trade  
First Session  
Addis Ababa, 12-22 September 1962

TRAINING COURSES IN COMMERCIAL POLICY

(Information paper and comments prepared by the GATT secretariat)

## PREFACE

It was intended to present the Standing Trade Committee with a report on training courses in trade promotion in Africa. Unfortunately lack of information prevented the Secretariat from preparing a comprehensive report. The following paper, submitted by the Secretariat to the Contracting Parties of Gatt, covers only the Gatt secretariat training courses in Geneva and in Africa and the views of Gatt on further aims of regional and international schemes of training in commercial policy and in trade promotion. A Gatt office circular outlining the current fellowship programme in detail (titles of courses and lectures and schedule of practical work) can be consulted at the Secretariat of the Trade Unit.

A. GATT SECRETARIAT TRAINING COURSES IN  
GENEVA AND AFRICA

1. Training courses in Geneva

1. As a result of an agreement entered into between the GATT and the United Nations the GATT secretariat has organized, since 1956, a programme of in-service training in Geneva by means of a small number of fellowships granted by the United Nations to qualified officials nominated by their governments. Two courses are held each year, one beginning in February for English-speaking candidates and the other in July for French-speaking candidates. Each course lasts for a period of about five months and is normally limited to six or seven participants.

2. In admitting candidates to this programme, preference is given to men and women who have completed university training in economics or similar subjects and who are permanent officials in the government of countries which are parties to, associated with, or in process of accession to the GATT. Particular attention is now given to applications from officials in the newly-independent States of Africa.

3. A total of some eighty officials from the following thirty-three Governments have participated in the GATT courses:

Argentina	Finland	Japan	Poland
Brazil	Gabon	Madagascar	Rhodesia and
Burma	Ghana	Malaya,	Nyasaland,
Ceylon	Greece	Federation of	Federation of
Chile	Haiti	Mali	Tanganyika
Congo (Leopoldville)	India	Nicaragua	Trinidad
Cuba	Indonesia	Nigeria	Tunisia
Czechoslovakia	Iran	Pakistan	Turkey
Ecuador	Israel	Philippines	Yugoslavia

4. The object of the GATT training programme is to give trainees practical instruction in the procedures and methods most appropriate for dealing with

such problems of a commercial and economic nature as they will have to handle in the course of their official career in the government of their own country. Apart from being instructed in matters of trade policy and in GATT problems in general, trainees are required to take an active part in the actual work performed within the secretariat.

5. Broadly, the general curriculum of the training programme is as follows:

One month in the office of the Executive Secretary for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the organizational, liaison, legal and diplomatic work of the secretariat.

4-6 weeks in the Trade Policy Division for the purpose of gaining experience in the work of the Division and in the operation of the multilateral system of international trade as practised within the GATT. This part of the programme is intended to familiarize trainees, not only with the GATT rules covering the various aspects of international trade, but also with the experience gained in the course of recent years, and is based on concrete cases that have involved deliberations and decisions by the CONTRACTING PARTIES. In the latter connexion the trainees are given a detailed analysis of the various obstacles to trade that have been examined by the GATT and are made familiar with the methods which are being adopted to reduce such obstacles and contribute to an expansion of trade. Particular emphasis is placed on the means for expanding the trade of less-developed countries.

4-6 weeks in the Trade Intelligence Division for the purpose of acquiring first-hand knowledge of the methods used by the GATT secretariat for analysing commercial trends and deriving the proper conclusions as to the outlook for future expansion of particular markets.

During the ensuing time, the trainees are required to study concrete cases received for examination by the secretariat and to prepare a draft report which is then commented upon by the staff member in charge of the particular department concerned or, as the case may be, compared with the official report drawn up by the secretariat. Furthermore, trainees are given an opportunity of following the proceedings of sessions of the CONTRACTING

PARTIES and the work of committees. They are called upon to study the background documentation and to prepare notes or draft reports which are subsequently compared with the final report issued by the secretariat.

During the course of the last month, the trainees undertake an educational tour of a number of nearby countries where they have the opportunity to gain first-hand insight into the application of various customs procedures, the operation of raw materials import and export transactions, export incentive methods, etc.

6. So as to give in more detail an indication of the scope of the training given, details of the curriculum for the current course are attached as an annex.

## II. Courses in Africa

7. The secretariat of the GATT, with the financial assistance of the United Nations Technical Assistance Organization and the support of the Economic Commission for Africa, is holding this year in Africa short courses on foreign trade and commercial policy. The first course is being held at Dakar from 16 July - 4 August and is for French-speaking officials of governments in West and Equatorial Africa. The second course will be held at Dar-es-Salaam from 30 August - 19 September and will be for English-speaking officials proposed by the Governments of East African States and territories. The maximum number of non-local participants in each case will be fifteen and, in addition, the government of the country in which the course is held can nominate up to five local candidates.

8. These courses, which are the first to be run in Africa by the GATT secretariat, will each last for a period of three weeks. The qualifications required for participation are the following: University or high school education, preference being given to officials having already acquired some experience in an economic or financial service of the government or of a public body. In exceptional cases, where the government concerned is not in a position to submit candidates having the required qualifications, the Director of the course is entitled, as an exceptional

measure, to accept officials having only secondary school education, but with some experience in government service, or graduates having just left the university for appointment as government officials, if he is satisfied that these candidates may usefully follow the course. However, these candidatures will be taken into account only if all the other candidates having the required qualifications submitted by other governments have already been accepted for participation.

9. The programme for the courses is intended to cover such subjects as the following:

- (a) the role of imports and exports in economic policy;
- (b) the relationship between commercial policy and economic development;
- (c) the objectives of commercial policy;
- (d) practical implementation of commercial policy;
- (e) the role of the customs tariff;
- (f) structure of the customs tariff;
- (g) nature of customs duties (specific, ad valorem, mixed);
- (h) the practical problems arising from ad valorem duties (customs valuation);
- (i) administrative controls (quantitative restrictions, exchange control, etc.);
- (j) subsidies;
- (k) influence of fiscal considerations on commercial policy;
- (l) development of exports; the contribution made by private undertakings and the government to the development of exports;
- (m) international action in the field of commercial policy (institutions and procedures); advantages and disadvantages of active participation by the African States in such action;

(n) efforts made at the national and international level with a view to stabilizing commodity prices and foreign exchange earnings derived from exports of primary commodities;

(o) regional economic integration and other forms of economic and trade agreements between countries of a single region or between two or more regions.

10. In addition, visits and practical discussions will be organized in order to give participants in the courses an idea of the practical problems which arise in connexion with imports and exports and to discuss with competent people dealing with the various services and activities related to foreign trade the organization and methods applied to obtain the best results. These discussions are intended to cover, not only trade, but also transport, financial arrangements, insurance, maritime transport, harbour and docking facilities, customs clearance, etc.

B. FUTURE AIMS - REGIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL SCHEMES

I. Training in commercial policy

1. With the introduction of the courses in Africa referred to in Part A of this paper, preliminary training in questions of foreign trade and commercial policy is now being given on a regional basis in Africa, while training on an international basis is available through the GATT secretariat courses in Geneva. There are obvious advantages in this two-tier system. On the regional courses, apart from what he learns from the lectures etc, an official will benefit from the contacts he makes with other officials from various parts of Africa and from the exchange of views and experiences with those officials about the different trade problems which they encounter in their own countries. The same thing applies on an international plane to the GATT secretariat courses in Geneva, where it has been found that such contacts have been both valuable and instructive.
2. If the governments concerned and the Economic Commission for Africa wish it to do so, and provided its rather limited resources in personnel permit, the GATT secretariat is prepared to continue to co-operate in the running of regional courses in Africa on foreign trade and commercial policy of the kind which has just been initiated. It will be easier to see whether any changes in the curriculum, duration and geographical scope of the courses should be made when the first courses at Dakar and Dar-es-Salaam being held this year are completed. It would seem to be desirable that there should be two courses each year, one for French-speaking and the other for English-speaking candidates.
3. The GATT secretariat courses in Geneva will continue to be run in the future. It is the intention that the number of participants will, as at present, be limited to six although it may, as in the past, be sometimes necessary slightly to exceed this number. One of the main objects in restricting the number of participants is to ensure that they get the kind of private coaching from secretariat officers which is an essential aim of the courses.

II. Training in trade promotion

4. The kind of training given in connexion with trade promotion must obviously be geared to the needs, trade patterns and degree of development of the area concerned. In so far as Africa is concerned, there might be advantage in studying the work done in this field in Asia and the Far East and in Latin America.
5. Training courses on trade promotion for African government officials and people engaged in business could be of considerable value. There is, and will continue to be, an urgent need for the economically less-developed countries to achieve a substantial increase in their export earnings and any step which might contribute to this end should be actively pursued.
6. There are two aspects to the sort of training that should be given and both of these should be taken into account in the establishment of curricula for any courses that might be established. In the first place, there is the basic training in such technical matters as organization of marketing, transit trade, handling exports, shipping, customs clearance, packaging and other matters relating to the presentation of goods etc. as well, possibly, as such subjects as accountancy, languages, etc. There are certainly a lot of subjects of this sort which could be usefully included and the attention and emphasis to be given to any particular subjects would, of course, depend on the needs of the area.
7. The second aspect of the training which should be given is fundamentally of greater importance. The urgent need for a substantial increase in the less-developed countries' export earnings has been referred to above. The curricula for courses on trade promotion should, therefore, give prominence to lectures aimed at making government officials more "export minded". Such lectures should bring out clearly that an increase in export earnings is essential if less-developed countries are to achieve an accelerated rate of economic development, that inflows of private and public capital will certainly be insufficient to close the gap between available financial resources and developmental requirements and that, in any case, the debt

which is thereby built up has itself to be serviced and, in the long run, creates a further drain on available resources. The lectures should stimulate discussion on the advantages of economic diversification and the production of additional export products, on the need to examine and be fully aware of overseas demand and the availability of markets for particular products, on the possibilities offered for increased intra-regional trade etc., etc.

8. If both these aspects were included in the curricula the aim would be, on the one hand, to achieve increased proficiency in the technical matters relating to the selling, handling and presentation of goods and, on the other hand, to stimulate market research, and to create a greater sense of urgency in the search for increased exports and export income.

9. As in the case of the training in commercial policy described in section II 2 of this paper, there might be advantage if training in trade promotion were also conducted on a two-tier basis, with first stage regional courses in Africa supplemented by an international course. The regional courses might last for about three months and the central, or international course, for somewhat longer. In each case this would enable two courses to be held a year, one for French-speaking and the other for English-speaking candidates.

10. If the governments concerned and the Economic Commission for Africa wished to avail themselves of its services, and if its resources of personnel permitted, the GATT secretariat would be prepared to assist in connexion with the courses, particularly in so far as the type of training referred to in paragraph 7 above is concerned.