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Postal Development Strategy

I Fixing objectives and priorities

In the postal field the work to be undertaken or continued in the interest of the countries of the region in the 1970s relates firstly to the organization and operation of services and secondly to training staff.

1. Organization and operation of postal services

Several spheres of activity deserve special attention in the organization and functioning of postal services.

a) The first matter for consideration is the forwarding of mail, which is the Post's fundamental job. The two methods of forwarding (air and surface) should be studied in depth so that the country can decide on the services which best meet the needs of the Post. Two studies have been completed in this respect under regional projects (ECA) of the UNDP (Africa regional 21.67 and AFR/UPU/69/3/Rev.2). These studies revealed certain weaknesses in the postal forwarding system which cause big delays and unnecessary costs. The changing character of the factors that determine an optimum forwarding system leads to certain procedures being laid down under which postal administrations would be able to receive regular advice on the subject.

b) In addition, especially because national postal services are interconnected, it would be desirable if studies and operational activities could be carried out on the coherent development and modernization of postal services in the region considered as units of the same communications network. On the other hand, numerous countries of this region have no postal development plan. For those which have prepared one, the postal plan often includes a list of projects based on a sometimes too superficial analysis of the consequences of national

development programmes on postal traffic, the objectives which the postal services must attain to cope with the ever-increasing traffic and the resources needed to attain them. Aid to postal administrations as regards projecting traffic and planning and defining development policy thus assumes a high priority, and special efforts will be necessary to help countries whose postal position gives cause for concern.

The work of Regional Counsellors must be complemented here by arranging study courses on postal service planning which would enable officials of different administrations to learn forecasting techniques and exchange views with their colleagues in the region.

c) In addition, the primary part which the postal service can play in money circulation channels and the collection of savings in certain countries should not be under-estimated. Studies could be made in this field, the development of which is precisely one of the objectives fixed by the UPU.

2. Staff training

The word "training" should be understood in its widest sense, to include also further training and specialization of certain staff categories.

In the field of training thus understood, whether in Africa or other developing regions, UPU policy can be summed up in a few points:

a) All postal administrations should train their operational staff and as far as possible their junior staff at national level; this system is justified by the relatively large number of staff to be trained and the need to make training at this level as concrete as possible. The UPU therefore helps countries to set up postal schools.

b) For middle-grade staff (management or operational services), the UPU recommends multinational courses in the region or sub-region as the case may be, except where requirements justify holding such courses at national level. This is the reason for setting up the Abidjan regional centre in French-speaking Africa, the activities of which should be continued and broadened, and the preparation of the project to strengthen the Nairobi postal training centre, already submitted to the UNDP, for the benefit of the East African English-speaking countries.

c) In the case of senior staff, the UPU takes the view that training should be given both in the region (participation in multinationally-organized training) and/or in the developed countries (participation in group or individual courses or training periods). At this level the UPU has so far only undertaken further-training activities for the countries

forming part of the region, in the form of seminars as indicated above. However, it should be noted that phase 2 of the project concerning the Abidjan regional centre provides for senior staff training. On the other hand, the further training of such staff in certain highly-specialized fields could be ensured by means of courses arranged in cooperation with the relevant national or regional institutions, such as the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) at Dakar and the Centre of Administrative Training and Research for Development (CAFRAD) at Tangier.

II Work programme

In order to attain its objectives, the International Bureau envisages over the next few years a programme of activities comprising the following elements:

1. Technical assistance mission by development specialists

The International Bureau will continue to make development specialists available to administrations which request them for restricted periods either to study special technical problems or to make more general studies aimed at pinpointing the deficiencies and weaknesses of the service and seeking ways of remedying these, or to collect the information needed to prepare a national technical assistance programme.

2. Training of instructors

As far as resources are available under the UPU Special Fund, the International Bureau will grant administrations the fellowships needed to train instructors.

3. Preparation and finalization of technical assistance projects

The International Bureau will prepare and implement technical assistance projects envisaged by administrations on a national or multinational scale.

4. Seminars and study courses

Within the limit of resources available under the UNDP, the UPU proposes to organize seminars and courses to study in particular the problems raised by the modernization of postal services and modern instructional techniques.

5. Specialized courses

In addition, to provide administrations with staff specializing in forecasting, planning and modern management techniques, it is proposed to organize specialized courses in this field, if possible,

with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning at Dakar (IDEP) and the African Centre of Administrative Training and Research for Development (CAFRAD) at Tangier.

Measures envisaged by the UPU to assess
progress made during the Second Decade

The UPU does not have sufficient resources to make a continuous assessment of the progress made during the Second Decade, as desired by the UN. It therefore proposes to carry out this assessment on the basis of the following principles:

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1. "Photographing" of postal services in all the young countries at the beginning, middle and end of the Decade, so that progress can be assessed by comparison. For these "photographs" the International Bureau will use the indicators drawn up as part of the work relating to the Second Decade and shown on the enclosed list.

2. Use of sampling, concentrating efforts on a dozen countries suitably chosen, in each region which would agree to participate actively during the Decade in assessment operations concerning them. This would give an indication at the end of the Decade as to the development of postal services in each region by means of the progress noted in the sample.

3. Maximum possible use of information already available. Much information will thus be taken from the study on "Existing organization of postal services in developing countries and ways and means of enabling them to provide an efficient service" which is being prepared by the Consultative Council for Postal Studies.

Postal Development Strategy

Appraisal of Progress Achieved in the Framework
of the United Nations Second Development Decade

List of Indicators

A. Mail traffic

1. Rate of increase of mail traffic in relation to the rates of increase of GDP, education and population
2. Volume of mail traffic per capita
3. Percentage of registered items to the total number of items

B. Postal offices

1. Average number of inhabitants served by a post office - mobile offices included
2. Average area in km² served by a post office
3. Number of localities not linked to the postal system
4. Ratio of the postal staff to the population
5. Ratio of personnel expenditure to the total expenditures on postal administrative services.
6. Ratio of mail receipts to the Gross Domestic product
7. Average receipts per employee
8. Number of items handled per employee

C. Offices operation

1. Frequency of mail collections:
 - a) in post offices
 - b) outside of post offices
2. Average delivery time on 100 km (between the deposit office and the distribution office) for priority mail
3. Average delivery time of mail in a radius of 500 km
4. Frequency of distribution in urban areas and rural areas
5. Percentage of parcels carried by air mail in the international service over the total number of parcels
6. Percentage of items delivered through mail boxes over the total number of delivered items

D. Financial Services

1. Percentage of the assets of post office financial services (post office savings, banks, postal checks services, saving certificates) to the GDP
2. Ratio of the assets of post office financial services to national savings
3. Average number of inhabitants and average area served by a post office providing financial services
4. Number of savings accounts per one hundred inhabitants
5. Average balance per savings account
6. Average ratio of a savings account to the GDP per capita
7. Number of post office current accounts per one hundred inhabitants
8. Average balance of a post office current account per capita
9. Average number of operations per holder:
 - a) of a savings account
 - b) of a post office current account