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REPORT ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Report by the Executive Secretary

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## REPORT ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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## PART I - THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME

1. The Report of the Executive Secretary to the Seventh Session on the subject of Technical Co-operation<sup>1/</sup> gave emphasis to bilateral programmes of aid to Africa and to the co-operation between bilateral agencies and the Secretariat in the implementation of the Commission's work programme. The Secretariat continues to receive generous bilateral assistance in the form of experts, fellowships and gifts in kind as well as contributions in personnel and funds for jointly-sponsored projects. This assistance has enabled the Secretariat to broaden its general programme of activities and to supplement its regional programme of technical assistance which, because of the financial situation, has remained at almost the same budgetary level for the past three years.

2. With regard to bilateral aid, it would be the intention of the Secretariat to prepare annual reports for the information of Member States, since such reports (the information for which will be assembled by sub-regional offices in consultation with Resident Representatives) would be of great value in the biennial programming exercise and assist the Secretariat in its planning of the regional programme of technical assistance. It is important for the Commission, BTAO and the Specialized Agencies to have a total picture of aid, national, sub-regional and regional, in order that duplication of effort may be avoided and all high priority needs be met.

3. Part I of this report deals with two aspects of the regional programme of technical assistance: regional advisory services and training projects. The Secretariat continues to render assistance in many ways to African States by active participation in United Nations country programmes of technical assistance. Experts are briefed by substantive officers of

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<sup>1/</sup> E/CN.14/312

ECA before taking up their assignments; the periodic and final reports of experts are received and commented on by the secretariat; requests for assistance from the UN Development Programme (Special Fund) from member governments are received in draft form by the secretariat and carefully examined before being transmitted to the UNDEVPRO with suggestions and re-formulation where necessary. Many Special Fund requests, contingency requests and requests for utilization of programme savings, from individual countries and sub-regions, are actually initiated and drafted by regional advisers or regular staff members of the secretariat. While, because of the lack of travel funds, it was not possible to arrange missions throughout the region in 1966 to advise Governments and Resident Representatives in their planning of the 1967/68 technical assistance programme, the secretariat carefully reviewed and commented on all the proposals submitted to BTAO, towards aligning them more closely with the general development policy for the continent as expressed in recommendations of the Commission.

4. Annexes I and II of this report list the projects in the 1965 and 1966 regional programme of technical assistance under three headings: a) Regional Advisory Services, b) Training Centres and Projects with Training Component, and c) Other Projects. These lists do not include technical assistance projects, the implementation of which was entrusted to ECA though financed from country programme funds or extra-budgetary sources. Special reference should be made to projects carried out by ECA with country programme funds because these have increased in the past few years; among these, in 1966, were the Special Ghana Mission, assistance to the Senegal River Basin Committee, assistance to Zambia and Dahomey, a mission to Cameroun, and several relatively short assignments of regional advisers to meet urgent country requests.

5. There has been a notable increase in the activities of the Secretariat in the field of training. While some of these activities are not directly related to, nor financed by, the regional technical assistance programme, it is appropriate to take note of them here.

6. Perhaps the major concern is the identification and assessment of manpower and training requirements in Africa, by fields of activity and by categories of personnel. The secretariat has sought to encourage Member States to establish and develop central machinery for manpower planning and for the co-ordination of the national training programme with assessed manpower needs within the framework of overall development planning. To this end, a Regional Adviser in Manpower Planning is being appointed to advise and assist Member States in this field.

7. The secretariat has also provided advice and assistance to Member States in connection with the improvement and expansion of training facilities, and has attempted to stimulate the demand for training of Africans in specialized fields in areas of felt need. Information on training opportunities both within and outside the region is collated and disseminated regularly to all governments through the medium of the quarterly "Training Information Notices". Many offers of bilateral fellowships and scholarships available to Africans are channelled through the Commission and implemented by the secretariat. The secretariat, furthermore, assists in the selection and recruitment of African economists and statisticians for in-service training programmes and study tours sponsored by ECE as well as for training in the ECA secretariat.

8. As revealed in the lists of regional projects in Annexes I and II, a large portion of the Commission's allocation of technical assistance funds is devoted to training projects. These projects are of two types: established centres which enrol trainees on United Nations and bilateral fellowships for annual 9 - 12 months' courses, and short ad hoc training courses, many held annually, either at Commission Headquarters or in the sub-regions. Selection of the subject matter of these courses is based upon assessed needs of African Governments for middle- and high-level manpower in specialized fields of development. The former have been restricted, to this date, to training centres in statistics and demography and to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in Dakar. The regional programme provides funds for fellowships to IDEP's

Summer Course and Seminar and to the Specialized Course in Cairo, supplementing funds made available by the Special Fund and bilateral donors. Directors, teaching staff, fellowships, equipment and travel funds are provided for the middle-level Statistical Centres and the Demographic Centre in Cairo on the basis of agreements between host Governments and the United Nations. All but one of these agreements (Dar-es-Salaam Centre) have expired or will expire shortly, and in line with United Nations policy, which is to transfer training centres to national sponsorship after a period of initial support, regional assistance to the Centres at Achimota, Yaoundé, Addis Ababa and Cairo will be completely withdrawn by the end of the 1968/69 course. The technical assistance programme will continue to provide for the Directors of these centres, for visiting lecturers and intra-African travel, through the 1967/68 biennium. Commencing from the 1967/68 courses, fellowships must be financed by recipient governments either from country programme funds or from other sources. The Statistical Centre at Rabat, now a Special Fund project, will receive support in the form of fellowships to the end of the 1966/67 course.

9. The allocation of such a large percentage of technical assistance funds to training projects is a direct consequence of the interest expressed by Member States. There is a need to establish new centres, in statistics, demography, natural resources, transport and other fields and there is always a demand for ad hoc training courses and seminars. However, as mentioned earlier in this report, the funds available for the Africa regional programme are very limited and if the number of training projects is to be increased, assistance will have to be obtained from other sources. The Commission now receives generous help for some of these projects from bilateral agencies and it is hoped that assistance from these sources will continue. At the same time, it will be necessary for Member Governments themselves to consider assuming a larger proportion of the travel and subsistence costs for their nationals attending the regional centres, short courses and seminars.

10. A major component of the regional programme of technical assistance is the corps of regional advisers. ECA now has an authorized complement of 37 advisers encompassing most of the priority fields within the competence of the Bureau of Technical Assistance Operations.

11. Regional Advisers are technical assistance experts attached to the Secretariat for rendering, at short notice, advice and assistance to African governments on assignments of limited duration. These assignments fall into two general categories which frequently overlap: those which are undertaken at the specific request for assistance in a specialized field from an individual State or several States, and those which are carried out in accordance with the approved work programme of the Commission for obtaining basic information for formulating programmes of assistance to member governments both on a national and on a sub-regional basis. The visits of regional advisers are in all cases arranged with the knowledge and concurrence of the government(s) concerned. On occasions, advisers also participate in meetings, seminars and working groups where their expertise can be made available to officials from several African countries. In the performance of their functions, advisers are often called upon to assist in the formulation of requests under the country programmes and in the drafting of Special Fund or contingency requests. From the first-hand comparative experience gained in travel throughout the region, ECA advisers have been able to provide a body of knowledge about development problems in Africa which places the Secretariat in a very strong position to plan its work programme and to render advice to Member States. In the next biennium, in line with the change in emphasis in the work-programme of the Commission, it is to be expected that more intensive use of the regional advisers would be called for, in the formulation and implementation of concrete projects, particularly in the industry, trade, agriculture and transport sectors.

12. During the two year period 1965/66 advisory services have been provided, by the regional advisers, to all countries of the region. Three of the five advisers in statistics have concentrated their efforts in

North Africa, although one of these served for several months in Central Africa. The fourth has been based in Accra, providing services to countries in West Africa, while the fifth has operated from Addis Ababa. One of the four advisers in industry is permanently stationed at the sub-regional office in North Africa while the other three, stationed at Commission Headquarters, carried out several extended missions to West, Central and East Africa during the biennium. In the field of customs administration, where conversion to the BTN has been the major concern, the two advisers have operated from Accra, Addis Ababa and Zomba. During the second year of the period, the four advisers in public administration have, between them, visited all sub-regions and most countries of Africa, one serving for an extended period in East Africa. One of the advisers in social development is now stationed in Niamey while the other two, available at the request of all countries of the region, are stationed in Addis Ababa. All six advisers in natural resources (including cartography) and the two in transport, while attached to ECA Headquarters, carried out lengthy assignments in the four major sub-regions.

13. While because of the limitation of the number of regional advisers and funds for their travel and subsistence it is not possible for the Secretariat to respond immediately to all requests for the services of regional advisers, in most cases it has been possible to provide advisers when the request is known to be urgent. Commitments are normally made in advance in order to schedule field assignments. Frequently, in expressing their interest in the proposed regional programme, governments indicate in only a general way their desire for advisory services. In order that field assignments may be planned in the light of known priorities, the Secretariat has urged that all requests for regional advisers be as specific as possible and include a full description of the tasks to be undertaken, most convenient dates for visits and estimated duration of assignments.

PART II - BILATERAL PROGRAMMES

14. In Part II of the Executive Secretary's report on technical co-operation to the Seventh Session <sup>1/</sup> a general review of new developments in bilateral aid to Africa was given in which emphasis was placed upon projects of assistance to individual African countries which had been proposed and/or initiated by the secretariat. An increasingly important component of bilateral assistance to Africa insofar as the Commission is concerned, is the contributions in kind received directly by the Secretariat or directed to regional projects sponsored by the Secretariat which have enabled the Commission to broaden and diversify its programme of service in the region.

15. Since the establishment of ECA eight years ago, and most noticeably during the past three years, the work programme of the secretariat has become increasingly complex and technical, requiring expertise in a wide range of specialized fields. Even were the Commission possessed of sufficient budgetary credits to meet all demands, it would be extremely difficult for ECA itself to recruit and retain the variety of specialists required. From its own resources, the secretariat would hardly be able to respond to all requests for general feasibility studies let alone the many requests for ad hoc investigations which are constantly being received.

16. For these reasons the contributions in kind on a bilateral basis for specific purposes have become extremely useful and highly valued by the Commission. Such assistance, which has grown to substantial proportions, has become an indispensable part of the Commission's work programme and has enabled the Secretariat to adopt a somewhat more comprehensive approach in its planning to include every aspect of economic development and, in the co-ordination of aid throughout the region, it is hoped that the co-operation between ECA and bilateral donors will continue to increase in future to the benefit of all concerned.

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<sup>1/</sup> E/CN.14/312



17. In the field of industrial development the Secretariat has received considerable assistance from bilateral experts in a wide range of specialized fields. During the 1965/66 biennium, experts in the fields listed below have served from three to nine months, chiefly at the Commission Headquarters and in most cases at no cost to ECA:

- Standardization
- Food Industries
- Electronics Industry
- Chemicals Industry
- Electrical Engineering Industries
- Inter-Industry Balances
- Agro-Allied Industries
- Small-Scale Industries
- Clothing Industry
- Rivercraft Industry
- Rubber Industry
- Industrial Input-output
- Sugar Industry
- Tea Industry
- Furniture Industry
- Non-Ferrous Metals
- Industrial Economics
- Housing Industry
- Packaging Industries

18. In natural resources and transport, the aid from bilateral donors has been directed more to the support, in whole or in part, of projects sponsored by the Commission. In this category can be included the survey by a bilateral team of the possibilities of establishing a Water Resources Development Institute in East Africa, the forthcoming study of the navigability of the Middle-Niger, the survey of sites for training centres in aerial surveys and the Map Documentation and Reference Centre at ECA. Four transport studies planned by the Commission - in West Africa, Central Africa and the Horn of Africa - were carried out during the period by bilateral teams of experts and in 1965 another team conducted a study of Ocean freight rates in East and West Africa.

19. Bilateral assistance in the field of training has increased steadily during the past few years. The Annual Summer Course and Seminar offered by IDEP would not be possible without the generous contributions of several donors, and the Institute's research programme is based upon

a substantial grant from a single bilateral agency. The regional statistical training centres at Yaoundé, Dar-es-Salaam and Abidjan and the Demographic Centre in Cairo are regularly in receipt of funds for fellowships and in some cases for lecturing staff from sources outside the United Nations. The most recent development in the field of training is the large number of fellowships offered by European countries to African students in the implementation of which the Secretariat has acted in a liaison and co-ordinating capacity.

20. Many of the seminars and training courses organized by the Secretariat in various aspects of public administration have been subsidized, and their scope widened, by the provision of consultants and participants' travel funds. Consultants were also provided, at no cost to the Commission, for seminars in taxation, and a long-term consultant served with the Secretariat during the period in youth work. In agriculture, the Secretariat was closely associated with two 1965 projects - a Seminar on Agricultural Input Factors and a Livestock and Meat Survey, the former financed entirely by the sponsoring agency.

PART III - GENERAL

21. This very brief review of the Commission's regional programme of technical assistance and of assistance from bilateral sources would not be complete without an examination of African aid programmes in general. The region is now receiving a considerable volume of aid though - except, in isolated instances - nowhere approaching its known needs. Questions which arise are:- Is this aid objectively planned and properly co-ordinated? Is it effectively utilized and having a lasting impact?
22. Economic and social development in any country or region cannot be sustained unless attention is given to those elements of the infrastructure which provide the basis for stability and growth. In most parts of Africa it is in this very area where aid is most required, where it is both insufficient and ill-planned.
23. The obvious need is for trained manpower. While assistance continues to be given by multilateral and bilateral agencies to schools, universities and institutes (and for the most part this assistance is effectively utilized), most of these institutions follow traditional patterns of training which ignore the immediate requirements for rapid development. Furthermore, enrolment of Africans in national and regional institutions of learning, and in advanced courses abroad, appears predominantly to lie in the liberal arts rather than in engineering, science, technology, business management and medicine where the needs are greatest. Everywhere in Africa there is an urgent need for more vocational and technical schools, and more in-service training courses, directed to the needs of agriculture, natural resources development and industry. Since the absence of middle-level personnel with managerial and technical skills is proving to be a serious bottleneck to national development efforts, external assistance is needed more to be directed to remedy the situation. Side by side a thorough and long-range assessment of manpower needs is necessary and here, as well, technical assistance, both multilateral and bilateral, fully co-ordinated, could have a lasting effect on economic development of the region.

24. Inadequate systems of transport - national, sub-regional and regional - constitute the second biggest obstacle to economic development in Africa. It stifles agriculture, prevents the full exploitation of known natural resources and thwarts the integration of industry. It encourages importation from abroad and blocks intra-African trade. While the correlation between transport and economic progress has been repeatedly demonstrated in history, little attention appears to have been paid to the construction of transport links within the countries, between countries, and with the outside world. Recently, studies of the transport needs in four sub-regions have been carried out by bilateral agencies in co-operation with the secretariat and a co-ordinated plan for action and machinery for implementation are being prepared. But the problem is a formidable one and this area is one where a massive and well co-ordinated effort, and with vast amounts of aid, are essential.

25. Improvement of public health is a third sector where large outlays of aid capital could provide a lasting benefit. Instances could be cited of large-scale industrial projects and agricultural schemes which ignore such matters as housing, sanitation and nutrition upon which the well-being of the people involved as well as the eventual success of these projects are dependent. While considerable achievements can be recorded in the control and eradication of malaria, leprosy, sleeping sickness and tuberculosis, these diseases have held the spotlight while a host of other equally debilitating and demoralizing ailments remain virtually untouched. Well organized national anti-ill-health and antimalnutrition campaigns are as important as - if not more important than - anti-literacy drives. The major responsibility in this area - for the formulation and implementation of policies with respect to housing, provision of adequate water supplies and sewage disposal systems, establishment of health centres for education and treatment - lies with the African governments, but at the same time aid and investment projects could give heed to the essential aspects of public health, and aid programmes could be directed to the prevention of illness.

26. Some aid to Africa has been misdirected and misused because of political objectives of the donor, the recipient or both. Many prestige projects fall into this category. Where national self-interest is the dominant factor in aid programmes, likelihood of failure, with boomerang effects, are fairly certain. But many technical assistance and aid projects are less effective than they might be, even when the motives are above question, because they are not related to well conceived and clearly defined objectives of the country or region or to a realistic assessment of priorities and practical possibilities. Many aid programmes are short-term, planned over a one-year or two-year period, and many components of these programmes are rigidly "tied" or earmarked. Political considerations of the donor government usually determine these features and, while they make long-range planning more difficult, they should not prevent implementation of assistance in line with the known needs and established goals of recipient countries. Again, many technical assistance projects are ad hoc, based upon unrealistic expectation rather than careful survey and planning.

27. Aid programmes might also fail to achieve their objectives because recipient governments do not or cannot fulfil their part of the undertaking. All good aid is a partnership in which the recipient's investment in capital, manpower and services is as essential as that of the donor. An aid project is successful if it remains viable and develops after the aid is withdrawn and this implies, for the recipient, the provision of counterpart personnel and services on a permanent basis.

28. A serious criticism of current aid programmes in Africa relates not to the amount, planning or forms of aid, or even the vision of aid, but rather to the failure of agencies to co-ordinate their programmes. This point, as well as the responsibilities of donors and recipients was stressed during the sixth annual conference on Development which was held in Cambridge in September 1966 and was reiterated by the conference chairman in his concluding statement: "In practical terms, the problem emerged as

one of strengthening the supervisory and managerial roles of the UN Development Programme, the World Bank and the regional development banks to co-ordinate bilateral and multilateral aid more effectively; and to insist on tougher standards of performance by both donors and recipients". There is little doubt that with co-ordination, and no increase in outlay, more could be accomplished. Even within the United Nations family there is duplication of effort and sometimes competition. If, in the planning of aid, agencies were to give sufficient attention to what is being planned and done by others, exchange information, and, wherever and whenever possible organize consortia or co-operate with the best interests of the recipient in mind, wasteful duplication, unbalanced and un-integrated development could be avoided. Recipient governments for their part need to insist upon co-ordination of aid programmes and establish national machinery for the purpose.

29. In the resolution of these problems the Commission has an important role to play. Its mandate is the promotion of economic and social development of the region. Its constituency is the continent of Africa as a whole, not individual states or sub-regions. In all its work-programming, the Commission seeks to co-ordinate and harmonize development, to encourage co-operation, to integrate, to unite. In association with OAU, it can look objectively at the needs of the region and suggest courses of action; it can bring to the attention of concerned United Nations organs, and to donor governments, constructive proposals for the improvement of aid programmes in Africa - for more aid for infra-structure development, for greater flexibility in administering aid, a clearer definition of long-range prospects and expectations and, not least, co-ordination of aid programmes.

ANNEX I

List of 1965 regional projects for Africa for which authority  
for implementation was delegated to ECA  
(grouped by nature of project)

Regional Advisory Services (Posts Occupied)

1. Regional Cartographic Adviser (1)
2. Regional Advisers in Industrial Development (4)
3. Regional Transport Advisers (2)
4. Regional Advisers in Statistics (5)
5. Regional Advisers in Natural Resources Development and Power (5)
6. Regional Advisers in Economic Surveys (2)
7. Regional Adviser in Economic Planning (1)
8. Regional Adviser in Public Finance (1)
9. Regional Advisers in the Social Field (2)
10. Regional Advisers in Housing, Physical Planning and Building (3)
11. Regional Advisers in Public Administration (4)
12. Regional Advisers in Fiscal Administration (2)
13. Regional Advisers in Customs Administration (2)
14. Secretarial Assistance to Regional Advisers

Training Centres and Projects with Training Component

15. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Addis Ababa
16. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Accra
17. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Yaoundé
18. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Dar-es-Salaam
19. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level (Fellowships), Abidjan
20. Statistical Training Institute, University Level, Rabat
21. Demographic Research and Training Centre, Cairo
22. African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, Dakar
23. Training Course in Industrial Programming (IDEP), Cairo
24. ECA/GATT Course in Commercial Policy (English), Addis Ababa

Training Centres and Projects with Training Component (continued)

25. ECA/GATT Course in Commercial Policy (French), Lome
26. Self-Help Housing Course, Addis Ababa
27. Training Course for Instructors in Social Work, Alexandria
28. Seminar on the Problems and Training Needs in the Field of Tax Administration, Addis Ababa.
29. Orientation Training Course in Local Government, Addis Ababa
30. Seminar on Personnel Administration for Central and Local Authorities, Addis Ababa

Other Projects

31. Seminar on Pulp and Paper Industries, Cairo
32. Meeting of Heads of Statistical Offices and Directors of Training Centres, Addis Ababa
33. Working Group of Experts on National Accounts, Addis Ababa
34. Experts Meeting on Joint Courses for Specialized Techniques in Surveying and Mapping, Addis Ababa
35. West Africa Iron and Steel Conference, Monrovia
36. Survey of Sites for Regional Training in Photogrammetry
37. Economic Integration in Africa, Preparatory Work
38. Trans-Sahara Road Mission, Consultant
39. Working Group of Experts, Population and Housing Censuses, Addis Ababa
40. Survey of Facilities for Research and Training in Water Resource Development, East Africa
41. Transport Survey, Horn of Africa
42. African Development Bank, Consultant Services
43. Integrated Airline Survey, East Africa, Consultant
44. Sector Studies in the Development and Production of Selected Building Materials and Components, Consultant



ANNEX II

List of 1966 regional projects for Africa for which authority  
for implementation was delegated to ECA  
(grouped by nature of project)

Regional Advisory Services (Posts Occupied)

1. Regional Cartographic Adviser (1)
2. Regional Advisers in Industrial Development (4)
3. Regional Transport Advisers (3)
4. Regional Advisers in Statistics (5)
5. Regional Advisers in Natural Resources Development and Power (5)
6. Regional Adviser in Economic Survey (1)
7. Regional Adviser in Economic Planning (1)
8. Regional Adviser in Development Planning, Agriculture (1)
9. Regional Adviser in Manpower Planning (1)
10. Regional Adviser in Public Finance (1)
11. Regional Advisers in the Social Field (3)
12. Regional Adviser in Economic and Social Development Policy (1)
13. Regional Advisers in Housing, Physical Planning and Building (3)
14. Regional Advisers in Public Administration (4)
15. Regional Adviser in Fiscal Administration (1)
16. Regional Advisers in Customs Administration (2)
17. Secretarial Assistance to Regional Advisers

Training Centres and Projects with Training Component

18. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Addis Ababa
19. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Accra
20. Statistical Training Centre, Middle Grade Level, Yacoundé
21. Statistical Training Centre, Middle and Intermediate Levels,  
Dar-es-Salaam
22. Statistical Training Institute, University Level, Rabat
23. Demographic Research and Training Centre, Cairo
24. African Institute for Economic Development and Planning,  
Summer Course, Dakar

25. Training Course in Planning the External Sector (IDEP), Cairo

Training Centres and Projects with Training Component (continued)

26. ECA/GATT Course in Commercial Policy (English), Lagos
27. ECA/GATT Course in Commercial Policy (French), Tananarive
28. Seminar on Housing Statistics, Copenhagen
29. Pilot Course in Photogrammetry, Khartoum
30. Seminar on Basic Cartographic Services, Nairobi
31. Training Course in Customs Administration, Addis Ababa
32. Training Course in Housing Administration, Preparatory Work
33. Training Course in Personnel Administration, Ouagadougou
34. Seminar in Budget Control and Management, Addis Ababa
35. Training Course in Local Government Finance, Addis Ababa
36. Orientation Seminar, Organization and Methods, Yaoundé

Other Projects

37. Sector Studies in Development and Production of Selected  
Building Materials
38. Expert Mission on the Selection of Sites for Operational Air  
Survey Centres
39. Working Group on National Accounts at Constant Prices, Addis Ababa
40. Working Group on Methodology and Application of Industrial and  
Distribution Statistics, Addis Ababa