

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



52229

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.14/CAP/37
16 November 1967

Original: ENGLISH



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Conference of African Planners
Second Session
Addis Ababa, 4-15 December 1967

RESEARCH NEEDS IN THE FIELD OF PLANNING FOR YOUTH
IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

M67-1630

RESEARCH NEEDS IN THE FIELD OF PLANNING FOR YOUTH
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT^{1/}

1. The objective of all planning - whether in the physical, natural and human resources fields - is for development and optimum utilization of resources in question. A knowledge of the requirements of each field is essential for the development of a co-ordinated programme. We are concerned in this paper to discuss some of the areas within the human resources sector involving youth, which demand the attention of planners.
2. In recognition of the role which young people can play in national development, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in resolution 1086J(XXXIX), drew attention to the needs and the role of young people in national development, and called upon the United Nations and the specialized agencies to provide advice and assistance to Governments in their efforts to satisfy these needs and to enable young people to participate fully in the development process. Such a programme will enable the development and execution of programmes,
 - (a) to facilitate the contribution of young people to development and ensure that their efforts are directed to feasible objectives within the total development plan;
 - (b) to strengthen the motivation of young people to participate in and contribute to programmes of self-help and mutual assistance; and
 - (c) to protect young people from exploitation and excessive participation in development activities which might harm their health and hinder their physical or mental growth and their development as individuals and as citizens.

^{1/} This document should be read in conjunction with ECA document E/CN.14/SWSA/5 (UN Sales No.66.II. K.7), Family, Child and Youth Welfare Services in Africa.

3. To achieve these aims it is necessary to direct attention to action aimed at helping to provide young people with opportunities for employment and service to the community and to prepare and assist them to make use of such opportunities.

4. Planning which enables youth to participate in national development is essentially good planning. For the youth such planning means:

- (a) development of human resources (of the youth), and
- (b) planning for and utilization of available manpower (of the youth).

5. The first exercise involves planning for the long-term, while the second implies immediate action. It is, however, possible and, indeed, necessary to benefit from available resources before they are fully developed or while these resources are being developed.

Basic considerations

6. The basic assumptions that can be made with respect to development of youth are:

- (a) All young people between the ages of 15 and 25 must be prepared:
 - (i) for working life;
 - (ii) for leisure time activities;
 - (iii) for civil and social life;
 - (iv) international life and understanding.
- (b) Preparation for working life entails the following needs:
 - (i) a good general education and appropriate training;
 - (ii) development and learning while at work;
 - (iii) health care and opportunities for sound physical and psychological development.
- (c) Youth must have confidence in their society and the future of that society or community.

- (d) There must be opportunities in the society for constructive community co-operation for adherence and dedication to a worthy cause.
- (e) There must be opportunity for the utilization of youthful talent and self development.
- (f) Special effort must be made to bridge the gap between the sexes and to enable young women to play a more active role in society.

7. In respect of the above observations, it is necessary to point out that the needs of youth can be met largely within the framework of services under education, health, vocation, welfare and employment. The development of the total community, in which the youth are to be found, is also of prior importance. This is so particularly in the rural communities. This means that the following must receive due consideration:

- (a) secondary and technical (vocational) education;
- (b) university training and technological education;
- (c) adult education and literacy programmes;
- (d) recreational programmes;
- (e) youth service programmes and organizations;
- (f) vocational guidance and counselling systems;
- (g) youth employment bureaus and programmes to combat unemployment among youth;
- (h) health service and allied programmes.

Research Possibilities and Programmes

8. Considerable research needs to be carried out in order that educators, vocational guidance counsellors, social workers, labour officials and development planners can understand more fully problems facing the youth and how these can be solved. Even though for the socio-economic planner sufficient is known to enable constructive planning for the maximum, immediate and long-term utilization of the resources of youth, it is necessary to examine certain areas which are not yet fully understood.

9. In planning for youth a political decision on the part of the government is generally called for. This could be a policy statement bearing upon the government's attitude towards the development of youth at the national level in order to give direction to any programme to be embarked upon by planners. Such a statement is often difficult to make in the absence of relevant data.

10. It is in the interest of further development of resources affecting the youth to investigate channels of communication between technical personnel and political decision-makers in order to ensure that those who make decisions are in possession of relevant data or material. In this area significant research can be undertaken to discover the processes at work that promote or mitigate against such co-operation.

11. A survey of human resources is necessary in order to determine available manpower for utilization and development planning. In this connection it might be mentioned that the system of education which obtains in individual countries needs to be evaluated in terms of manpower requirements. Questions for which answers might be sought include the following:

- i. Is universal education necessary or possible?
- ii. What are the priorities for an educational programme?
 - a. primary education
 - b. secondary grammar vs. modern education
 - c. technical education
 - d. vocational training and rehabilitation
 - e. apprenticeship training programmes
 - f. university education
- iii. What job opportunities are open to youth groups?

12. Research into conditions necessary for the retention of youth in rural communities is also desirable. This would seek to understand conditions that force young people to leave the rural areas in the first place, conditions in the cities and towns which attract them, and the type of young people who do or who do not migrate so that positive plans can be

made to encourage but not to force young people to remain in the rural environment. Sociological, psychological and economic conditions that come into play here can be investigated to advantage. Since the rural communities are essentially agricultural communities, an understanding of the land tenure system and exploration of agricultural credit and financing should enable greater success at finding solutions to the problems involved.

13. To tackle the problem of mass movement of people from the rural to urban areas, it is necessary to improve the social and economic conditions existing in centres of the rural areas. Educational and recreational facilities must be provided; cultural and health facilities must be available also. Economic incentives must be available. In fact, life must be tolerable, if not enjoyable, in these localities in order that the psychological atmosphere necessary for the retention of the rural population can exist. How these can be achieved, of course, requires some research in order to arrive at relevant conclusions.

14. In the field of counselling, much research must be done in order to ascertain how techniques for counselling developed on other continents can be adapted to or made more meaningful for use in Africa. It is necessary also to seek to know the results of various counselling techniques on various age groups and in respect of different occupations. Young people chose a vocation largely on the basis of prior experience or contact with members of professions in question. Since the horizon, contacts and experience of many rural youth are limited, a deliberate and well conceived counselling system is essential to arresting the erosion of the talent of rural youth.

15. The machinery for executing programmes for youth needs to be investigated also. Many youth programmes have failed because of their theoretical orientation, leadership, organization and lack of national direction. Future programmes and current ones need assessment of organizational factors that make for success.

Training

16. It is essential that personnel engaged in the planning and implementation of programmes for youth should receive adequate training commensurate with the tasks they perform. There is need for qualified educators, teachers, counsellors and vocational guidance experts; for social workers, physical and trade training instructors, as well as an opportunity to acquaint economists, doctors, the police and public administrators with problems of youth.

17. Activities involving youth should be well co-ordinated - possibly by a Ministry of Youth which will also undertake the training of its own staff and youth leaders, etc.; and which will co-ordinate all youth-oriented programmes both in and out of schools, and in the universities.

18. A function of this co-ordination agency would be to ensure the adequate participation in and benefit from all youth programmes by young men and young women alike; and to ensure that the youth find the proper avenue to make their contribution to national development.

19. Much that is written, intended or promulgated by governments go unimplemented because of lack of proper machinery for their implementation. The national co-ordination agency should ensure that plans and intentions are translated into action and that this is executed on a more realistic and equitable basis with respect to age categories, educational standard, regional representation and in the national interest as well as in the interest of the youth themselves.