

67227



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL  
E/CN.14/99  
1 February 1961  
Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
Third session  
Provisional agenda item 13(b)

APPRAISAL OF THE PROGRAMMES IN THE ECONOMIC,  
SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS FIELDS

61-457

APPRAISAL OF THE PROGRAMMES IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS FIELDS

1. In paragraph 5 of the operative part of resolution 791(XXX) the Economic and Social Council invited the United Nations Regional Economic Commission to study the consolidated report entitled Five-Year Perspective, 1960-1964 (E/3347/Rev.1, Sales No. 60.IV.14) of the Commission on Programme Appraisals and to present its comments to the 1961 Summer Session. This report is the final version of the appraisal, undertaken by the Secretary-General, of the scope, trend and costs of the ordinary United Nations programme in the economic, social and human rights fields. The original appraisal had been made with the help of regional commissions, specialized institutions and the International Atomic Energy Agency. The consolidated report is therefore a final version collating the separate appraisals, due account being taken of the modifications proposed by the Economic and Social Council.

2. The report outlines the general framework within which the activities of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies could be developed in the economic, social and human rights fields. It is not the purpose of the Report to formulate explicit programmes, since the various organizations normally lay down their own periodic programmes of work. The ECA Executive Secretary made his contribution in a document published at the time of the Commission's second session (E/CN.14/37) and drafted in the light of the Commission's terms of reference and the views expressed by its Members in the Commission's first report to the Economic and Social Council. It can be seen from the report that in a general way the Commission's views have been taken into account. The Secretariat considers that the report is in line with the Commission's aims in regard to economic and social development in Africa and will not entail any modification of the Executive Secretary's original appraisal.

3. The Economic and Social Council has nevertheless invited the Commission to pass on its comments on the consolidated report. To facilitate the Commission's task the Executive Secretary reproduces below those passages in the report which are of particular interest to the ECA.

4. Paragraphs of the consolidated report (Five-Year Perspective, 1960-1964) of particular interest to the Economic Commission for Africa

Para. 130 (p.40) As noted, the compilation of data on an international basis is one of the major activities of the intergovernmental organizations. Thus, publication of statistics on economic and social topics is a continuing function of these organizations. This includes not only special studies but also a number of regular statistical series. For example, the United Nations now publishes on a regular basis: an annual Statistical Yearbook which contains comprehensive data covering a large number of economic and social fields; a Demographic Yearbook containing detailed demographic statistics; a Yearbook of International Trade Statistics; a Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, which contains details of the national accounts of some seventy countries; and a report on World Energy Supplies, giving data for some 150 countries and territories. In addition to these annual publications, the United Nations issues a Monthly Bulletin of Statistics covering a variety of economic and social subjects of current interest; a quarterly report on Commodity Trade Statistics; a quarterly Population and Vital Statistics Report; and a Direction of International Trade (published jointly with the IMF and the IBRD) which comes out in eleven monthly issues and one annual issue. Current economic statistics are also included in the economic bulletins of the regional economic commissions, and a number of periodic statistical bulletins are also published by them, especially by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

Para. 136 (p.41) A major purpose of international statistics work is to help to build up national statistical services. The publication of statistical data and reports in itself may serve this purpose. In addition, technical assistance has been given and will be intensified in the period under review through experts, fellowships, and training centres. A major push is planned to develop statistical services for Africa and to complete a statistical survey of that continent. Considerable work has already been done in developing statistics in the other regions.

Para. 138 (p.41) Closely related to the regular statistical publications of the United Nations and specialized agencies is a series of regular

surveys of economic and social conditions. While the statistical publications are primarily of direct interest to governments, the surveys serve to assist in the formulation of international policies, as well as to inform governments. Publications of this kind are the annual world economic report; the biennial world social reports (which alternate between surveys of conditions and surveys of programmes); the triennial reports on human rights; the annual economic surveys of the Economic Commissions for Asia and the Far East, Latin America, and Europe;<sup>1/</sup> the annual reports of the Director-General of ILO; the annual FAO state of food and agriculture; the WHO report on the world health situation. The pattern of these publications promises to remain more or less the same for the next five years. By and large, there is a tendency to concentrate on particular subjects in successive surveys of a series, in addition to giving a comprehensive coverage of world trends in the field in question. Thus, the world economic survey has a tentative programme of concentration on various selected topics in the forthcoming years. A special review of the world economic situation at, say, five-year intervals is being contemplated.

Para. 140 (p.42) The United Nations has a series of projected research projects in industrialization and plans to expand its research relating to programming techniques and the formulation of economic and social development policies at the national level. The United Nations also plans to explore the field of longer-term economic projections in connexion with the formulation of international economic policy. FAO expects to step up its activities relating to agricultural research; it proposes a major expansion in commodity trend studies and long-term projections, as well as in food consumption surveys, and will give more attention to economic analysis for agricultural planning. The proposed new ILO Institute for Labour Studies will presumably lead to an increase in research, which has always been a part of the regular activity of that organization. WHO has already embarked recently upon an intensified programme of medical research.

<sup>1/</sup> ECA is planning to publish in the "Economic Bulletin for Africa" periodic reviews of current economic trends in African countries and territories, outstanding developments in economic and social policies and repercussions on African economies of policy decisions taken by governments of important trading nations outside Africa.

Para. 153 (p.45) The development of energy resources is of particular concern to the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency; the World Meteorological Organization and UNESCO are also involved. In matters of global interest, the United Nations appraisal proposes to concentrate on (a) economic appraisal of energy resources, and (b) analysis of long-term costs and prices of fuel and power. With specific reference to under-developed countries, studies will be undertaken of the economics of energy development, including new sources of energy, and more specifically of the economics of electrification. On a regional level the regional economic commissions have developed programmes in the field of energy particularly with regard to coal and electric power (ECE also on natural gas) and have undertaken studies of energy balances covering energy from various sources. The work of the regional economic commissions in the energy field will be intensified.

Para. 176 (p.50) The concern of the regional economic commissions of the United Nations in all aspects of the economic development of their regions has necessarily caused them to be active, in close collaboration with FAO, in the field of agriculture. To facilitate co-operation, joint divisions with FAO have been established in the secretariats of ECE, ECAFE, ECLA and ECA. The emphases that are likely to emerge in the work of these joint divisions are described in the United Nations appraisal in detail. It is proposed, for example, that the ECE/FAO joint division should give increased attention to forecasts of production and demand so that agricultural resources could be utilized more rationally and trade be steered in directions of mutual advantage. In the ECAFE region, continued activity is anticipated in agricultural planning, financing and credit, price policies, marketing and agricultural economics, and study of the utilization of agricultural surpluses. The joint division of ECLA/FAO expects to concentrate on analyses and projections of agricultural production and trade for the regional market, and on studies of the role of agriculture in the economic development of the region and of obstacles to agricultural growth. In ECA, the joint division will review current progress in agriculture and examine means and plans to increase productivity, with particular emphasis on studies of diversification in agriculture and of factors in the transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture.

Para. 185 (p.52) Industrialization and productivity play a large part in the activities of the regional economic commissions. Sub-committees or working groups have studied and kept under review a wide range of topics such as: iron and steel (ECE, ECAFE and ECLA); certain small-scale industries (ECAFE); techniques and methods of programming industrial development (ECAFE and ECLA); automation (ECE). In the newly established ECA, the need is recognized for studies of various aspects of the problems of industrialization in Africa, including the financing and programming aspects. All the regional commissions expect to expand their work in industrialization.

Para. 191 (p.54) The main emphasis of the work of the United Nations in the future, however, will be on technical assistance activities in such fields as inland transport by road, rail and water and on economic aspects of transport and communications, especially in relation to economic development. These forms and aspects of transport are to receive increasing attention, especially in ECAFE (e.g. the project of an Asian highway from Istanbul to Singapore) and in ECLA. The Economic Commission for Africa will also devote special effort to problems of transport development which have high priority in all countries of the region. This shift in emphasis to transport questions in the less developed countries is consistent with the fact that the tremendous recent advances in the technology of transport and communications, which have been referred to earlier, have benefited the developed countries but have had disproportionately small or uneven effects on the internal and regional economy in most of the under-developed areas. Although the importance of this field in providing the essential underpinning of nascent industrial societies is widely recognized, much more has to be done to make advances in transport and communications economically possible in the countries that need them most.

Para. 202 (p.56) Among the projects of the ECA is the study of the impact of the European Economic Community on the trade of African countries, which is to be undertaken in consultation with the ECE secretariat, GATT and other international organizations. A series of studies on intra-regional trade and also on primary products in the world markets is planned.

Para. 203 (p.56) Although by definition the regional commissions are primarily concerned with the trade problems of their own regions, there is also the question of trade relationships between regions and of the need for knowledge of each other's activities and, where appropriate, for collaboration. It is becoming increasingly clear that some of the most important regional economic problems, if they are to be solved realistically, must be submitted to global as well as regional consideration. This is particularly true of payments, common markets, free trade areas, and commodity policies.

Para. 208 (p.57) The United Nations programme in the field of population will be extended in the following directions during the next five years: (1) information on population trends and their relation to economic and social problems; (2) studies of rural-urban migration in under developed countries; (3) demographic pilot studies demonstrating to interested governments the methods of collection and use of demographic data; (4) aid to governments in the evaluation and utilization of the results of the censuses of 1960 and 1961; (5) world conferences and regional seminars aimed at developing interest in and understanding of demographic problems.

Para. 209 (p.57) ECLA, ECAFE and ECIA will undertake various projects related to this set of topics. For example, ECLA is giving particular attention to demographic questions related to labour supply and to demographic analyses and projections required for economic programming. ECAFE will similarly consider the effects of population trends on manpower, capital formation and investment, and of economic development upon population growth. ECAFE and ECLA will concentrate on the regional training of demographers and on research on internal migration connected with urbanization. ECAFE has recommended the holding of an Asian population conference in late 1961 or early 1962, which will consider, among other things, the use of demographic studies in relation to economic and social development programmes and the experience of governments with family planning programmes and other methods of dealing with the problems of population.

Para. 213 (p.58) The United Nations (Bureau of Social Affairs) will meanwhile continue other programmes, such as the national and regional housing centres (in co-operation with the regional economic commissions) and work

in environmental (physical) planning and regional planning, particularly in relation to over-all development. ECE will emphasize problems of raising productivity in building operations, urban development and town planning, assessment of housing needs, and the international standardization and specialization of building equipment. ECAREC proposes to keep the question of low-cost housing and the reduction of building costs to the forefront of attention. The Central American Economic Integration Programme of ECLA includes studies of building materials industries, building costs, and the demand for building materials, as well as the prospects of meeting the demand with Central American products. ECA plans to organize a workshop on the improvement of rural housing and community facilities within community development programmes in Africa.

Para. 251 (p.67) The United Nations, which has set up regional institutes concerned with training in such fields as statistics, demography, public administration and housing, and has established a programme for training African economists at Headquarters, plans to continue activities of this type. ECLA jointly with EPTA will expand its Training Centre in development economies. An in-service training of economists will be established in ECLFE, and ECE intends to expand its in-service training programme. ECLA and ECLFE jointly with UNESCO will undertake surveys of the teaching of economics in their respective regions, looking towards increased training of economists in the practical requirements of economic development. The establishment of training institutes, as noted above, is one of the major functions of the Special Fund. The International Atomic Energy Agency, in co-operation with other interested agencies, has held a number of training courses, and plans others in such matters as the application of radioisotopes to agriculture and medicine; reactors; health physics and radiation protection; and carbon-14 dating in archaeological research.

Para. 277 (p.73) With growing interest in combined or concerted action to achieve over-all development, and in the interdependence of economic and social factors of development, a number of new programmes have emerged in this general area, and additional ones may be anticipated. The regional economic commissions for Africa, Asia and the Far East, and Latin America have recently incorporated in their terms of reference the "social aspects of economic development".

Para. 286 (p.76) However, the most significant new feature in the United Nations programme of public administration has been the recruitment and the partial financing of personnel to perform executive, operational and administrative functions as employees of the requesting governments (OPEX). This service is available, at their request, to developing countries suffering from a shortage of trained executives. Although the beginning has been modest, the volume of requests indicates that the service will expand. Since the posts to be filled are often in departments that normally deal, in international matters, with the specialized agencies, OPEX calls for very close collaboration within the United Nations family.

Para. 295 (p.78) In budgetary research, the analytic work on the re-classification of government transactions with a view to providing data for the formulation of economic and social policies is nearing completion. The economic and functional classification schemes developed by the Secretariat have been tested at regional budget workshops held in Asia and Latin America under joint arrangements with the regional economic commissions. High priority will be given to this type of work in Africa, where the first regional budget workshop is planned for 1961.

Para. 318 (p.85) The expanding of operations has meant a shift of emphasis from work at headquarters to activities in the field. The regional economic commissions, in particular those for Asia and the Far East, Latin America, and Africa, are steadily gaining in importance as focal centres for the discussion and the promotion of economic development, including its social aspects. It is here rather than in the Council or in the General Assembly that experts, planners and administrators meet, who have primary responsibilities for the economic development of their respective countries in the several regions. In the same vein, several specialized agencies have laid increasing stress on regional offices or are planning new regional or sub-regional offices in the areas of greatest need. In FAO, for example, field activities at regional offices have been growing faster than headquarters activities, and this tendency is expected to continue. From the start the WHO has, under its constitution, assigned far-reaching responsibilities to its Regional Committees composed of governmental

representatives: these regional bodies have played an increasingly large role in the formulation and operation of EAO programmes.

Para. 337 (p.90) This trend towards greater planning, programming and integration is evident, in varying degrees, throughout the major regions of the world. In Europe, efforts towards regional economic and social integration have been pursued largely outside the United Nations, although such organizations as the ILO and such bodies as the ECE have contributed to regional and sub-regional co-operation in certain technical fields. Moves towards common planning and greater economic integration in Asia and in Latin America have been spearheaded by United Nations bodies - for example, ECAFE in Asia and the Far East and ECLA in Latin America. EAO has been giving increasing weight to regional planning from the point of view of agricultural development.

Para. 338 (p.90) In the ECAFE region, a subsidiary body of the Commission - the Working Party on Economic Development and Planning - has for years dealt with problems of programming techniques and has adopted a "sector by sector" approach. Going beyond this, ECAFE has decided on the establishment of a Conference of Asian Economic Planners, with plenary sessions every two or three years, and to be attended by high officers dealing with economic development and planning. This Conference is to review the work and progress in the field of planning as a whole. On a sub-regional basis, the Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations on the Lower Mekong Basin, composed of the four countries on the Lower Mekong River, is pushing forward with the pre-investment surveys necessary for the development of the river basin, with the expectation of the establishment of a comprehensive development programme. A wide measure of similar co-operation is involved in the development through ECAFE of the Asian Highway. In Latin America, steady progress is being made with the ECLA-sponsored Central American Integration Programme, in which specialized agencies, particularly EAO, are co-operating. The top priority of that commission of the Council during the next years is assistance in the creation of a regional Latin American market and a payment system; a treaty establishing a free trade area has just recently been signed. The ECA in its first session emphasized concerted action as an essential factor in economic and social development and made concrete proposals to facilitate such concerted action and further economic co-operation among the countries and territories of various sub-regions.